

SHORT STUDIES IN THE UPANISHADS

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PREFACE

It was after some hesitation that I decided to write the present book. Now that the manuscript is practically ready for the press, I am again in doubt whether I should confer on it the dignity of a printed book. The ground of hesitancy was and is a feeling of diffidence.

As a student and a teacher of Philosophy, my time has been mostly spent in studying the development of philosophic thought in the West. When I take up a book on this subject, my feeling, as I get along with it is that, on the whole, I understand the meaning of the writer. With this feeling, there is explicit or tacit assent, if I accept the views of the writer, and dissent, if I do not. When I read the Upanishad, the case is somewhat different. Sometimes I have the impression that the meaning of the text is quite transparent, sometimes it appears somewhat obscure, and sometimes, inscrutable. The passages of the last variety are not very few, in the larger Upanishads, they are found in abundance. Several Upanishads form part of the Aranyakas (forest books). I can visualise the appearance of a dense forest in a dark night. It is dark in large tracts, in some

parts, it is illumined by tiny fires and tinier fire-flies. To me, parts of the Upanishads appear to be like such a forest. I approach them with a certain amount of reverence, and cannot, as do some foreign critics and commentators, dismiss such passages as absurd or puerile fancies. I rather sue my own dim vision.

With such consciousness of my limitations, why do I presume to write on the subject? I prefer not to answer the question I submit, however, that I write in profound humility. I don't presume to instruct anyone. The book is, what it professes to be, a number of my 'studies' in the Upanishads. I do not attempt a connected survey of the Philosophy of the Upanishads; nor do I trace the development of philosophic thought revealed in them. I pick up some passages and expound them. In the exposition, the subjective factor necessarily intrudes itself. If these "Studies" can be of any, the slightest, assistance to the Reader, I shall be happy, indeed, if they cannot, I shall be sorry for having been the cause of his spending his time so unprofitably. Greetings and good wishes.

Cannpore.

DIWAN CHAND.

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CHAPTER I

PHILOSOPHY AND ITS PROBLEMS

Philosophy is the interpretation of human experience

The reader is invited to accept, at least provisionally, the above brief statement about the nature of Philosophy. In regard to it, we shall consider the following points —

(1) What is meant by *Experience* ? What are the main contents of human experience ?

(2) What is meant by *interpretation* ?

(3) What are the results of this interpretation of Experience obtained so far ?

(1) Experience and its main contents

I generally look *without*, sometimes I look *within*. Whatever I get as a result of looking without and looking within may be called my experience. The two kinds of looking, known as extra spection and introspection, give me two kinds of Experience, external and internal. What are the contents of these two kinds of Experience ?

First, consider the external experience. What do I find when I look without ?

- (a) I see a variety of objects, each bounded, having a certain shape and a certain size, and occupying a definite position with regard to other objects. No two objects occupy the same position.
- (b) Each of these objects has a distinctive character of its own, *i.e.*, has attributes which distinguish it from other attribute possessing objects. These differences vary in their range. Some objects resemble each other more than they resemble others, and thus are capable of being regarded as members of *a class*.
- (c) Among the differences on which classes of objects are based, certain differences are very striking. These are distinctions between the non living and the living objects, and, among the latter, between the non-conscious and the conscious. Among the conscious objects, there are some that resemble, in structure and pattern, the object which I call my body.
- (d) Besides the objects, I notice occurrences, events or facts. These are changes that take place in some part or other of the external world of objects. The objects occupy positions alongside of each other,

the events happen not along each other, but together or one before the other Objects are in space, events occur in time

- (e) These changes sometimes appear to arise from within the object, but sometimes they seem to be due to the action of other objects. Some objects appear to be thus connected. So far as they are concerned, they do not give me a sheer many ness, but some kind of a whole.

Looking *within*, what do I find?

- (a) A succession of occurrences or processes of a very special type. The external events are *observed*, in the internal processes, *being observed* and the *observing* are inextricably blended. No two of these processes occur together. They occur one after another. They all belong together, as parts of a whole. They are processes like seeing, hearing, touching, pleasure, pain, desire, doubt, certainty, hope, fear, love, determination, volition.
- (b) As the basis of this changing panorama, I find myself, the ground of the change, the owner of these states.

- (c) My body is one among the many objects. As a body, I am a part of the world of objects. But I am able to isolate myself from the world—as its observer. Some of the changes *within* me, seem to be the effect of the external world acting on me. In return, I can also act upon it and produce changes in it. Thus I am connected with the world.
- (d) Among the changes I produce in the world of objects, the most significant are those produced in the object known as my body. It is through these that I can produce changes in other objects.
- (e) The most interesting of the other objects are the bodies that resemble my body. I observe that changes, similar to those that occur in my body, due to my volition, occur in them also. I assume that those bodies also are conjoined to selves like myself. There are other selves besides myself.

These are some of the experiences I have when I look without and look within. I assume that other human beings also have similar experiences. I cannot be sure of it, as I can have a *direct* knowledge only of my personal experiences. There

is, however, a strong presumption in favour of other experients having experiences and it is reinforced by our social intercourse. I also assume that brutes, higher and lower—there are grades among them too—have experiences, though not exactly of the type of human experiences. These assumptions made by me are among my experiences—parts of the content of internal experience. The totality of individual experiences may be called Experience.

(2) Interpretation. What is it?

The interpretation of Experience means comprehending or seizing it in all its implications. Almost all our judgments are based on certain presuppositions. I say 'Day after tomorrow, I shall leave for Lahore by the Frontier Mail' and in making this apparently simple statement, I assume that I shall be alive, shall be able to travel, and in a position to pay for the journey, to secure a ticket, and to secure a seat. I also assume that the Frontier Mail will then be running, that the earth and the sun will be in existence and the earth revolving round the sun, resulting in the succession of day and night. Any one or some of these assumptions may be belied by actual fact. Every science rests on certain presuppositions which it accepts uncritically. It is the

business of Philosophy to lay bare these presuppositions and to examine their claim to validity

The experiences mentioned above are saturated, so to say, with such assumptions 'I see a variety of objects having distinctive characters, occupying specific positions in space' So it appears, but is it really the case? And, first of all, what is the difference between an object's appearing and its being really there? I see or seem to see objects outside me What is this *outsideness*? Is there any thing outside me? Am I in Space or is Space in me? Are there any objects different from me? And if so, are they only numerically different or different in kind as well? Are there any other beings of the same type as myself? Am I different from the processes that go on within me or is the 'I' merely a name for these processes taken together? I distinguish between events that merely happen and events that are caused by a volition—between Facts and Acts Is there really a difference between them or are they all the same type? In the latter case, are the so-called Facts really Acts, or the so-called Acts merely Facts? A host of such questions has to be answered before we can understand the nature of Reality They are all comprehended under 'interpretation of Experience'

A formidable job to answer these questions. But before we begin the task of *knowing the nature of Reality*, we need an assurance that the task is possible, that it is within our competence to know the Real. What is meant by Knowledge, as distinguished from Belief and Opinion? What are the means of acquiring knowledge? Is Error a possibility? If so, how are we to distinguish between Truth and Error? If knowledge is possible, are there any limits to it? And if there are, what are they? Here is another list of very difficult questions which we cannot escape. The ancients, it is said, asked 'What can I know? What is the nature of Reality?' The moderns ask 'Can I know anything? If so, how?' This is true about the development of Philosophy in the West, in our own country, both the questions have equally engaged the attention of thinkers from very early times.

(3) The results of the interpretation of Experience achieved so far

The reader, if a novice in Philosophy, would naturally be eager to know the results of the interpretation of Experience achieved by the joint labours of generations of philosophers. He may be shocked to hear that no summary statement of such results can be given. In regard to Philo-

sophy, it may not be accurate to talk of the 'joint labours' of philosophers. The scientists can and do cooperate in a real sense, for the main business of science is to collect facts and to classify them. Interpretation of facts is a different business. Even scientists, when they come to interpretation of facts, generally move on diverse paths. In philosophy, where interpretation is the main task, individual differences are inevitable. Advance in philosophy is not made by adding to the stock of facts or ideas, but by better insight, by more profound criticism. A new view does not add itself to the old view, but reshapes the old view. 'The history of Philosophy', it has been said—in a cynical spirit but not without some justice—, 'is a history of disputations and refutations'.

We cannot, therefore, give a catalogue of results achieved in the attempts made to interpret Experience. All that can be done is to state the different solutions that have been proposed to each of the fundamental problems of Philosophy. This is what the history of Philosophy does. It is the story of the human mind thinking and rethinking about its Experience and the Reality that is assumed to reflect itself in this Experience. The study of Philosophy to day is

largely the study of the history of Philosophy. We have systems of Philosophy—diverse, often contradictory, views on the nature of Reality and on the nature of Knowledge. The theory of Reality is known as *Ontology*, the theory of Knowledge, as *Epistemology*. *Ontology* may be analytic in procedure or method. Then, its business is to discover the ultimate elements of which Reality is made. It may also consider Reality as a whole and seek to find out its Ground. In this aspect it is known as *Cosmology*.

What are the main theories of *Ontology*, *Cosmology* and *Epistemology*?

(1) *Ontology*, the theory of Reality or Being

We start with our experiences or the phenomena which we apprehend. Is there anything behind and beyond them? *Phenomenalism* denies the existence of any such thing, *Realism* maintains that there is a *Substance* that appears or manifests itself in these phenomena. The phenomena are evanescent, they come and go, change is their essence. Change is possible only in some thing *permanent*, otherwise, it is no change, it is sheer *manyness*.

If we accept the existence of *Substance* (*dhatu*), we have to enquire whether it is one or more than one. *Monism* maintains that all Reality is

homogeneous, *Dualism* holds that it is of two distinct kinds—Mental and Physical

Monism has several forms

According to *Materialism*, ultimately all that exists is matter. Matter has the 'promise and potency' of all that has or can have existence. The ultimate constituents are unanalysable. When arranged in a certain manner, they become particles. These, in course of time and in certain combinations, become crystals. In crystals, several particles interpenetrate each other, they are not merely juxtaposed, but interlocked. In certain circumstances, matter is organised and becomes *living*. Life, in course of time, gives rise to consciousness. Matter evolves into a variety of forms, but is the sole stuff of all that exists.

Idealism maintains that all Reality is at bottom *spiritual*. The so called material object is nothing but a cluster of attributes or qualities. These qualities are simply *our ideas*. Colour is only apprehension of colour, sound, apprehension of sound. Another variety of Idealism or Mentalism reduces each physical object to a huge colony of minds (*Leibnitz' monads*), each conscious of itself alone. In a conscious being, as man, there is, in addition to these monads, a central monad, called the Soul.

A third variety of Monism, refuses to merge mind into matter or matter into mind. It places both of them on the same footing and desubstantializes both. According to it, the one and only Substance has an infinity of Attributes, but our knowledge is limited to only two of these Attributes—Thought and Extension. Thought manifests itself in innumerable Modes, and so does Extension. The Modes of Thought are Minds, the Modes of Extension are Bodies. This view is known as Spinozistic Monism.

Dualism recognises the existence of Mind and Matter as two independent Substances. According to Interactionism, each of them acts on the other. According to Parallelism, each moves on its own path, physical changes are causally connected amongst themselves, and psychic changes with other psychic changes. There is, however, a parallelism or correspondence between the two series of changes, which gives rise to the illusion that mental changes cause bodily changes and *vice versa*. Really, there is no interaction between Mind and Matter.

The *Sankhya* emphasizes the fact of evolution in Matter, but maintains that this evolution does and can take place only under the gaze of the Spirit. In regard to Spiritual Monism, another

point has also to be considered Is there only one spirit or are there many ? Singularism maintains that there is only one Absolute Idealism holds that *Brahman* is the sole Reality, all else is only the manifestation of *Brahman* According to *Solipsism*, I am the sole Reality, all else is my images. *Pluralism* accepts the existence of an indefinite number of spirits

(ii) Cosmology, the theory of the World

Cosmology considers the World as a whole and enquires whether it is founded on anything other than itself ? *Theism* maintains that it is founded on a Personal God, *Atheism* denies it Theism is the creed of the majority of mankind In what way is the World founded on God ?

According to *Creationism*, God produced the world out of Nothing He issued the fiat—'Let it be', and it was there This is the view of Islam and Christianity According to another view, God fashioned the World out of stuff that already existed in chaotic form He is not its creator, but *Designer* To what was one, He gave manifold form According to *Pantheism*, the World is an Emanation from God, just as the spider's web is an emanation from the spider

Pantheism identifies God and the World. This identification assumes two forms. According to *materialistic Pantheism*, God is (is only another name for) the All, according to *spiritualistic Pantheism*, the All is God. The first variety is not distinguishable from atheism, the second is *acosmism*.

(iii) Epistemology, the theory of Knowledge.

The conflicting theories of the nature of Reality would cause bewilderment to the reader. This bewilderment gave Philosophy a new direction in the modern era in Europe. All the systems had proceeded on the assumption that truth about the nature of Reality was attainable. Was this assumption justified? A consideration of this question shifted emphasis from Ontology to Epistemology or the theory of Knowledge.

The main problems of Epistemology are the following —

(a) What is meant by Truth?

Is all Truth of one form, or are there grades or degrees in Truth?

(b) How is Truth attained? What are the sources of Knowledge?

(c) What are the tests that enable us to distinguish between Truth and Untruth?

(d) Are there any limits to our Knowledge?

If so, what are these limits?

On these questions, too, there is a lot of difference of opinion among the philosophers. We can, here, just refer to these opinions.

(a) What is Truth?

Truth cannot be predicated of individual concepts. There is no point in asking whether 'table' or 'triangle' is true. It can be predicated only of judgments. Suppose I say, 'This table is made of marble.' What is meant by saying that the proposition is true? When I make the statement, I have a certain idea in my mind. Does the objective fact correspond to my idea? If it does, my statement is true; otherwise, false. This view is known as the *Correspondence theory of Truth*. The view appears to be quite satisfactory, but when we reflect a little, we find a serious difficulty in accepting it. How can I know whether the objective fact does really accord with my idea? When I see Govind and also his photograph, I can say whether they do or do not agree. If I see only the photograph, I am unable to pass any judgment about the existence or non-existence of similarity between the photograph and the original. Now can I see the table except through the impression it produces in

me? If I cannot, if my direct knowledge is limited to the contents of my consciousness, I am precluded from saying that there *is* a correspondence between objective fact and my idea. I can know only one of the two terms—my ideas.

This difficulty drives us to seek some other definition of Truth. Some philosophers suggest *Coherence* as the essence of Truth. When a statement coheres with, or fits into the framework of, the body of knowledge already possessed by us, it is accepted as true, if it does not, it is rejected as false. The assumption is that all Truth is one whole, it stands or falls together, it cannot brook any internal conflict or disharmony. If we are to be rigid in our inquiry, we must ask on what grounds the main body of what we accept as 'Truth' has been so accepted. Not only the new judgment, but the old judgments too must vindicate their claim to truth. On what grounds is that claim finally based?

Pragmatism maintains that the claim to Truth made by any judgment must be *practically* verifiable. 'Truth is that which works.' Pragmatism may be regarded as the utilitarian theory of Truth.

Are there degrees in Truth?

The common-sense view is that all Truth is one type or texture. Some philosophers ho

that Truth is Absolute or Relative Constituted as we are, we can know Relative Truth only

(b) What is the source of our knowledge of Truth ?

According to *Empiricism*, experience is the only source of knowledge. The mind of man starts as a blank tablet on which impressions are stamped. These impressions are the stuff of which all our knowledge is made. *Rationalism* holds a directly opposite view. According to it, all knowledge comes from *within*, all consciousness is ultimately self-consciousness. *Criticism* synthesises the two opposing views and maintains that, in Knowledge, we discern two elements—Matter (raw material) and Form. Matter is supplied from without, Form is given by the Mind itself. Without Form, Matter is chaotic (e.g., the sensations of an idiot), without Matter, Form is mere abstraction, it has nothing to work upon. Bacon has referred to three types of minds. Some act like the ant and gather experiences, others act like the spider and weave the web of knowledge out of their own selves, others, again, act like bees which gather material from flowers and transmute it into honey. Applying this illuminating analogy to the point under consideration, we may say that *Empiricism* considers the mind as

an ant, Rationalism as a spider, and Criticism as a bee

(c) How do we distinguish between Truth and Error ?

The doctrine of *pramānas* (means of demonstration or proof) is concerned with this question. The lists of these means, as given in the various systems of Indian Philosophy, vary. The most important and generally recognised means are—Perception (including Intuition), Inference and Authority of the Veda. The orthodox systems place great emphasis on the last, the heterodox systems do not accept it.

In the western Philosophy, Logic is mainly concerned with discussing the nature of demonstration. Deductive Logic regards consistency as the criterion of validity in reasoning, Inductive Logic is mainly concerned with the establishment of causal relations and has devised several methods for the purpose.

(d) The limits of knowledge

How far can our knowledge go ? According to thorough going *Scepticism*, we cannot even make a start. Indubitable knowledge is beyond our capacity, all we can have is personal opinion. Opinions are neither true nor false, they are only serviceable or unserviceable. But even this denial

of the possibility of knowledge is itself an assertion and claims truth. The attitude of *Agnosticism* is not so uncompromising. It accepts the possibility of knowledge so far as the world of phenomena is concerned, but denies it in respect of the ultimate Reality. We live in the world of shadows and see them; we cannot see the object that casts the shadows. We only know that such an object (Reality) exists; we cannot say whether the world of shadows or *māyā* truly represents the Reality that is the ground or basis of these shadows. According to *Idealism*, it is the business of Philosophy to divert attention from the world of *māyā* to the world of Reality and enable us to have a vision of the latter. Philosophy, according to Plato, is knowledge of the realm of Ideas. The Upanishads largely concur in this conception of the nature of Philosophy, and the possibility of at least partially apprehending the nature of Reality.

Ontology and Epistemology are the main branches of Philosophy. Besides these, the Theory of Value is also recognised as a branch. It comprises Logic, Ethics and Aesthetics. They are concerned with the Ideal—Logic with Truth, Ethics with the Good and Aesthetics with Beauty. Is the Ideal merely a creation of the imagination

or has it some objective reality? Some people maintain that in each form, the Ideal is only subjective. For *me*, what I get from my sensations is the Truth. For *you*, what you get from your sensations is the Truth. The classical statement of this view is the famous declaration of Protagoras that 'Man is the measure'. Similarly, what gratifies me is good for me, what gratifies my neighbour is good for him. Or, at best, the judgments about the Good and the Bad are personal opinions. A classical expression of this view is given in the words of Hamlet that 'there is nothing good or evil, but thinking makes it so'. That Beauty is a matter of personal taste is a view that commends itself even to some of those who do not accept the subjectivity of Truth and of Goodness. Against these views, the majority of men subscribe to the common-sense view that Truth, Goodness and Beauty are features of objective Reality. According to them, Truth has to be *discovered*, and, whether we are able to discover it or not, it exists all the same. Even if no one knew it, even if no human being existed, the two sides of a triangle would be greater than the third, and $(a+b)(a-b)$ would be equal to (a^2-b^2) . Similarly, the Good is something objective which we ought to realize.

What ought to be is in no way dependent on what I like. Lastly, we are drawn to objects because we apprehend them to be beautiful, we don't declare them beautiful when and because we have come to like them.

About these Ideals, there is another interesting point that deserves consideration. Are they three distinct ideals or only three aspects of one and the same ideal? There is a body of opinion in favour of the view that they are different aspects of the same ideal that may be termed Perfection. There are three aspects of our consciousness—knowing, feeling and willing. Probably due to our mental constitution, we view the Ideal from three different points-of-view. Truth is that which deserves to be *known*, Beauty is that which deserves to be *appreciated*, and the Good is that which deserves to be *willed*. Logic, Ethics and Aesthetics examine the same Ideal, but examine it from three different sides.

So far as we can know, probably the best expression of the Ideal here on our earth is the character of the man 'who thinks most, feels the noblest, acts the best.'

The contents of the chapter, itself a mere summary statement of the nature and main problems of Philosophy, may be summarised as follows —

(1) Philosophy is the interpretation of human Experience

This interpretation comprises the laying bare of assumptions involved in our judgments and examining their validity. These judgments are judgments *of* facts and judgments *on* facts.

(2) The main branches of Philosophy are the following —

(a) Ontology or the theory of Being,

(b) Cosmology or the Theory of the Origin of the Universe,

(c) Epistemology or the Theory of Knowledge,

(d) Axiology or the Theory of Value

(3) Under Ontology, the principal World-views or theories of the nature of ultimate Reality are —

(i) Phenomenalism,

(ii) Substantialism

Phenomenalism maintains that appearances constitute the whole of Reality, Substantialism holds that in order that there may be an appearance, there must be some thing to appear.

Substantialism is either Monistic or Dualistic.

Dualism accepts the ultimate and independent existence of two types of substance—Matter

and Mind. Monism accepts only one substance as the ultimate stuff of all that exists. According to Materialism, this one substance is Matter, according to Idealism, it is Mind, according to Spinozistic Monism, it is the common ground of both, Mind and Body. Minds are only modes of Thought, and bodies of Extension—the two known Attributes of the sole Substance. Idealistic or Spiritualistic Monism has two forms—Singularism and Pluralism. According to Singularism, all that exists is the expression of a single Spirit (*Brahman* or my Ego), according to Pluralism, the number of Spirits is indefinite or infinite.

(4) Cosmology undertakes to tell us of the origin of the world. According to Atheism, the world does not need any ground or basis. According to Theism, there is need of such a ground and the ground is the Will of God. According to Creationism, God created the world out of Nothing, according to believers in Design, God designed the world out of stuff that already existed in a chaotic form, according to Pantheism, the world is an emanation from God.

(5) Epistemology attempts to answer questions about the nature of Truth and the sources of

Knowledge On the nature of Truth, three theories have been put forward —

- (i) A judgment is true if the Idea expressed in it corresponds with actual fact
- (ii) A judgment is true if it coheres with the main body of knowledge
- (iii) A judgment is true if it can stand the test of practical verification—if it works

About the source of knowledge, too, there have been three views —

- (i) According to Empiricism all Knowledge is derived from Experience ,
- (ii) According to Rationalism, all Knowledge, real Knowledge, is evolved from within the Mind ,
- (iii) According to Criticism the Matter of Knowledge is supplied from without, the Form is impressed by the Mind

(6) Axiology or Theory of Value has three branches—Logic, Ethics and Aesthetics They deal with the nature of the Ideal as Truth, as Goodness and as Beauty respectively An intriguing question for the Theory of Value is whether Value is subjective or objective or partly the one and partly the other

CHAPTER II

AN INTRODUCTORY NOTE ON THE UPANISHADS

The Upanishads occupy a unique position in the literature of ancient India. The orthodox Hindu regards them as a part of the Veda itself. For the student of Philosophy, they are the root from which sprout the various systems of Indian Philosophy. The systems profess to derive their doctrine from the Upanishads. Each of them picks and chooses according to its own requirements but all agree in accepting their authority and owning allegiance to them.

The Upanishads are not philosophical treatises in the ordinary sense of the words. Their method is neither ratiocinative nor polemical. They enunciate conclusions, but generally do not tell us how these conclusions are arrived at. There is hardly any polemic in them. The seers have an experience by intuition and communicate it to some one qualified to receive the knowledge. This restriction is very significant. It is a trite saying that 'Little knowledge is a dangerous thing.' This is particularly true in the case of

metaphysical knowledge—especially when this knowledge is imparted to immature minds. Plato expressed the view that instruction in Philosophy should be given to a man only when he has passed the age of adolescence. The accusers of Socrates were alarmed at the revolutionary change in belief and outlook on life that his teaching was producing in the youth of Athens. The instruction given in the Upanishads is primarily intended for the eldest son or a chosen disciple. It is esoteric teaching, conveyed in 'confidential talk'. The word Upanishad means 'sitting near (the preceptor, and learning from him in such talk)'. Later it came to signify the teaching so conveyed.

The teaching is often conveyed in poetical or mystical language. This is a peculiarity that we also find in Plato. The language employed by Plato is charming, but the method employed by him has led to a serious difficulty. It is not easy to find in some places whether it is the philosopher or the poet that is speaking. And so often and so quickly does Plato shift from the one to the other that the reader is left in utter uncertainty. The same happens in the Upanishads. They are as much poetry as philosophy.

The number of the Upanishads is very large, but only about a dozen are authoritative. They are all unsectarian. Some of them are in prose, some in prose and verse mixed, and some in verse. Generally this difference is taken to be an index of the order in which they were composed.

Some passages occur in more than one Upanishad, and there are numerous parallel passages found in several of them. But it is not possible, on this basis, to determine which of them is the borrower, or whether all borrow from a common source. No Upanishad makes a reference by name to any other Upanishad, and in none of them do we find a list of the Upanishads. The question of chronological order can be determined, if at all, by the peculiarities of language, the nature of the subject-matter or the mode of treatment. Even the composition of the same Upanishad seems to cover a fairly long period of time. This is notably the case with the principal Upanishad, the Brihadâra-nyaka. It comprises six chapters, but there is a formal ending at the end of the 2nd and 4th chapters as well, with a list of the teachers or 'the school.'

The Brihad and the Chhandogya make a free

use of the Dialogue This method has certain advantages In the first place, when a doctrine or a thesis is expounded in the form of a dialogue between real or imaginary speakers, the reader has the impression of being a mere by stander and listener He has not the uncomfortable feeling of being tutored by some one who assumes the role of a superior person Psychologically, the method of the dialogue is appropriate inasmuch as a topic is best developed when there is an exchange of views on it The individuals engaged in the discussion do not meet merely to convey their old ideas to each other, they hope to engender new ideas as well, as a result of the discussion At the end of the discussion, there is not merely the pooling of pre existing resources, but a real increase in them This is well illustrated in the Platonic dialogues The dialogues in the Upanishads do not get the most out of this method There is not much of rubbing of shoulders, there is not enough even of give-and-take The expounder of the doctrine does the major part of the talking, and the disciple reverently listens This is because the Truth is taken to be the result of intuition and is simply to be conveyed The disciple cannot challenge it on rational grounds It can only be verified by

actual experience, and, so long as the seeker is not in a position to have the experience himself, the only way open to him is to accept it on the authority of those who have had the experience.

Almost every reader of the Upanishads notices the part played by the Kshatriyas in the development of metaphysical reflection, as recorded in these books. The performance of ritual and sacrifice was the obligation of all the twice born, but this was done under the supervision of the Brahmins. There was no such distinction between the Brahmins and the Kshatriyas in regard to metaphysical reflection. In fact there was a good reason why the rôle of the Brahmin should be rather secondary. He was pledged to uphold the primacy of ritual and sacrifice. The Kshatriya was not so pledged. He did not discard ritual and sacrifice, he even insisted on the need of meticulous care in their performance, but he placed personal virtue higher than these, and knowledge higher still. Often the Brahmin went to the Kshatriya for instruction in metaphysical truth. The latter assumed the rôle of the instructor, not without enjoying the anomaly of the situation.

We are not to understand that the Upanishads talk metaphysics and nothing else. Metaphysics is of course the absorbing topic, but there are

many and extensive excursions into other fields as well. While reading them, we meet with some of the problems referred to in the first chapter. The human mind, after all, is the human mind and thinks very much in the same way. The philosopher is 'the spectator of all time and all existence.' What does it matter *where* and *when* he reflects on his problems?

The 'Studies' that follow are based¹ on the following Upanishads: Īṣā, Kena, Katha, Mundaka, Praśna, Taittiriya, Śvetâsvatara, Chhandogya and Brihadâraṇyaka. The concluding chapter gives a few sayings culled from them.

CHAPTER III

MEANS AND ENDS

‘Those who worship *avidya* enter into blind darkness, the worshippers of *vidya* enter into darkness deeper still

The fruit of *vidya* is different from the fruit of *avidya*. Such is the instruction we have received from the sages who have taught us

He who knows both *vidya* and *avidya* together, passes over Death with the help of *avidya*, and attains Immortality with the help of *vidya*

Those who worship *asambhuti* enter into blind darkness, the worshippers of *sambhuti* enter into darkness deeper still

The fruit of *sambhuti* is different from the fruit of *asambhuti*. Such is the instruction we have received from the sages who have taught us

He who knows both *sambhuti* and *vinasha* together, passes over Death by *vinasha*, and attains immortality with the help of *sambhuti*

(Īśa 9 14)

The Īśa Upanishad, from which the verses quoted above are taken, forms, with slight varia

tions, the last chapter of the Yajurveda. The six verses appear in the Veda and the Upanishad without any difference, though the order of the two triads is reversed in the Upanishad.

Before we can hope to comprehend the real meaning of the verses, we have to be tolerably clear on the following points :—

1. What is meant by *vidyā* and *avidyā*, and by *sambhūti* and *asambhūti*?

2. What is meant by passing over Death and by attaining Immortality? Are these two distinct from one another? If so, how are they mutually related?

3. Are the two sets of means identical, and the statement repeated to reinforce one and the same truth? Or are they distinct sets? In the latter case, are they *alternative* means to the attainment of the same goal, or means which are *complementary*, each to the other?

Let us consider each of these points.

1. *Vidyā* and *avidyā*

Vidyā is knowledge. But what is *avidyā*? The initial letter *a* is the mark of negation. *Avidyā* may mean *Lack of knowledge*. I do not know the date of my birth. In regard to this, I am in a state of *avidyā*. This lack of knowledge is not absolute. If some one tells me I was born in

1901 A.D., I know he is making a wrong statement, if another tells me I was born in 1801 A.D., I am equally sure that he is wrong. My ignorance is my inability to locate the event precisely in a determinate period of 24 months. Suppose I believe that my birth took place on the first day of the first May during that period, and the fact is otherwise, then my belief, being opposed to fact, is erroneous. I am, again, in a state of *avidya*, but in a different sense. Here, *avidyā* is not lack of knowledge, but erroneous opinion. *Avidya* may also mean other than *vidya*. It is in this sense that the word is often used in our religious and philosophical literature, and means *karma* or Action. The majority of the commentators understand the term, as used in these verses, in this sense.

But it is possible to understand it in another sense still. When the Upanishads speak of *vidya*, they have generally two kinds of knowledge in view—a higher and a lower, *paravidyā* and *aparavidya*. *Paravidya* deals with what is ultimate, remote, *aparavidya*, with what is proximate, empirical, phenomenal. *Paravidya* corresponds to Plato's knowledge of Ideas, *aparavidya*, to the knowledge of the passing show, which hardly deserves to be called knowledge. As against

the higher, metaphysical knowledge, *aparavidyā* may be regarded as *avidyā* or ignorance

Sambhuti and *asambhuti*—These two terms have been variously interpreted as follows —

(a) *Sambhuti* —The manifest world, created nature

Asambhuti *Prakṛti* or matter in the original, unmanifest form, uncreated nature

(b) *Sambhuti* True cause

Asambhuti That which is not the true cause

(c) *Sambhuti* Becoming

Asambhuti Non becoming

The interpretations (a) and (b) conflict with each other. If Non becoming is understood in the sense of Being, the interpretations (a) and (c) coincide. In all cases, the reference is to the *viyakta* and the *avyakta*. Devotion to the manifest world would seem to mean permeation by this-worldliness. Devotion to the original cause would probably mean metaphysical reflection on the nature of the Ultimate Ground of the empirical world.

I am inclined to think that these two terms should be understood in an *ethical* sense. A clue to this seems to be furnished in the text itself. In

the first three verses, *avidya* is used as the contrary of *vidya*. This is not the case with *asambhuti* in the second triad. In the last verse, the word *vinasha* is substituted for it. *Vinasha* means cessation, destruction. If we understand it to mean the destruction or negation of the egoistic self, *asambhuti* and *sambhuti* will stand for *self negation* and *self fulfilment*, the negative and positive moments in moral progress. *Asambhuti* will be death of the specious, false self, its undoing or dissipation, *sambhuti*, a new life of the Spirit, a resuscitation or reconstitution.

2. Passing over Death and attaining Immortality What is meant by death ?

When a man dies, he ceases to perform any of the functions by virtue of which he was regarded as an individual among other individuals. He does not talk or move about, he does not cooperate with others, nor does he thwart them. His body begins to disintegrate, and is consigned to flames or laid secure in the grave. His relatives think he is finished. But *is* he finished ? Largely, it is a question of probable inference or faith. The Upanishads declare that the body dies, but the spirit dies not. 'Passing over death', therefore, does not mean securing unending existence. It means attainment of a certain stage in spiritual

evolution—an advanced stage, but not the last ‘Immortality’ is the highest reach in spiritual soaring. A commonplace analogy will illustrate the difference between the two states. Some dirty linen has to be dyed red. It must first be washed white. This is a necessary condition before the linen can be dyed red. Similarly, before one can enter into a blissful state, the stains on the soul must be washed away. Of the two stages, one has to be covered earlier than the other, but both are equally essential. And if a choice *must* be made between them, obviously, one must choose the earlier. With that, some advance is made, without it, no advance whatever is possible.

3 The two sets of means

In regard to the two sets of means—*vidyā* and *anidyā*, and *sambhūti* and *asambhūti*—two questions are to be answered —

(i) Are the two sets of means identical, and the reiteration intended to reinforce the same view, or are they two distinct sets?

(ii) In the latter case, are they alternative routes to the same goal, or means complementary to each other?

I shall not argue on either point, but simply state my personal view. The answer to the first

question would depend on our interpretation of the four terms. I am inclined to adopt the following interpretation —

Vidyā : Vision of the ultimate Reality.

Avidyā : Empirical knowledge, received through ordinary channels of experience.

Asambhuti : The breaking up of the false, egoistic self; self-negation.

Sambhuti : The positive building-up; self-fulfilment.

I regard the two sets of means as distinct from each other.

As regards the second question, many of our ancient teachers look upon knowledge and performance of Duty as self-sufficient alternative means to the attainment of the ultimate goal. My personal view, however, is that they are complementary to each other. Action and Reflection are both necessary. They are, as has been well said, the gymnastic and the music of the Soul.

We may now turn to the text with which the chapter opens. The title of the chapter is 'Means and Ends'. Our life is an unceasing progression. We are ever moving on. From the start to the finish, we are pursuing ends. Each end, except the very last, is generally a means to an end that

follows it. The final end may not be attained in our life time, but, none the less, there may be an advance towards it. Whether or not a particular movement is an advance can be determined only if one knows the final goal, or at least the direction in which it lies. According to the Īśa Upanishad, the ultimate goal is the attainment of Immortality. The penultimate end is referred to as crossing or passing over Death.

Two means are said to lead to the ultimate goal *vidyā* (higher knowledge) and *sambhūti* (realization of the true Self). Two other means are said to lead to the penultimate goal *atithā* (knowledge about empirical reality) and *asambhūti* (self-effacement or self negation). An important qualifying statement is then added in order that the means be efficacious, the members of a pair must be used conjointly, otherwise, they are of no avail. Nay, divorced from one another, they lead to disastrous consequences. And what may appear paradoxical, the disaster arising from the exclusive use of the higher means is greater than the disaster that follows the exclusive use of the lower means. "Those who worship *atithā* enter into blind darkness, the worshippers of *vidyā* enter into darkness deeper still."

The West, on the whole, is the worshipper

of *avidyā*, in this sense. All knowledge worth acquiring, in the opinion of the western people, is knowledge about this world, knowledge that has or can have some economic value. This knowledge has given the West its Science and Technology. It has enabled the white people to exploit the forces and resources of Nature. It gives them abundant means of subsistence and comfort, immunity from disease or at least means to combat it. Scientific knowledge and its applications give them a sense of security, which means freedom from the *fear of death*. But is this knowledge sufficient? It gives power, but it also engenders hunger for more power. The more they get, the more they want. The tragic element in the situation is that, as a result of their insatiable hunger for power, they begin to look upon the coloured people as parts of Nature, fit for exploitation. And if, even after this perverse extension of the realm of Nature, this realm is not found extensive enough for all the 'civilized' nations, they turn against each other. World War No 1 and World War No 2 have shown us what a purely materialistic civilization may lead to.

We, in India, have for long been worshippers of *vidyā*, in the sense of metaphysical knowledge

We have thought more of the next world than of the present one, given more time and attention to metaphysics and theology than to physical science, economics and politics. We have sunk into deeper darkness than those who believe in rank materialism. We have not been able to maintain our country's freedom, honour and dignity. Have we been sinning against more than sinning? The Upanishad maintains that the consequences of a materialistic civilization are not so disastrous as those of a culture that neglects the needs of the body and other interests of the present life. Humanity can be saved only if *vidyā* and *avidyā* are both worshipped together.

On the ethical side, there is a corresponding relation between *asambhūti* and *sambhūti*. Neither self negation, nor self fulfilment, is self sufficient. Self conquest must precede self fulfilment. We must die to live. Such dying is necessary as a means, but is not the final goal. The ascetic makes it an end in itself. There is no value in suffering as such. To be of value, it must lead to something higher. On the other hand, self fulfilment, dissociated from self conquest, is a mere illusion. Even if the final good is attained by a kind of disillusionment, such disillusionment is possible only to those who have gone through a

course of rigid self-discipline. Here, again, we find a difference between the West and the East. The western people, mainly under the influence of Christianity, attach greater importance to self-negation and the spirit of service that it leads to, we, on the other hand, place more emphasis on the spiritual culture of the individual, which is assumed to involve withdrawal from the world and its affairs. For the development of the whole person, social service and spiritual culture have to be blended in a harmonious whole.

CHAPTER IV

AGENTS, ACTS AND FACTS

As I look about, I find myself surrounded by a variety of objects, some lifeless and some living—plants, animals or other human beings. I also find that these objects are mutually related and related to me. I find change and, in some cases, refer it to activity.

Now what am I? How do these objects act upon me and upon each other? How do I act upon them?

Twelve or thirteen years ago, the Head Master of a local High School saw me in the office of the Principal at the D. A. V. College, Cawnpore, and requested me to inaugurate the parliament of his school. He informed me that in the preceding year the ceremony had been performed by Mr. A, and the year before by Mr. B. "What is the designation of the head of the realm?", I asked. "We refer to him as His Majesty", was the reply. "You change your kings so quickly: do you dethrone them or behead them?", I inquired. "Neither of the two—they abdicate, themselves," was his reply. I felt relieved and agreed to inaugurate the school parliament.

The ceremony with the attendant functions lasted for an hour and a half. In proper form, I was installed on the throne (a school chair); and when the function was over, the Head Master thanked me for having found time to oblige them. He referred to me as Principal of the D. A. V. College and Vice Chancellor of the University of Agra. I made a short speech. "The ninety minutes that have just passed," said I, "were the most glorious period of my life. My realm was as restricted in space, as my reign in time, and 'my people' and myself were well aware that it was all a make believe. Still, in a sense, I was a sovereign. That time, alas! is gone and even the Head Master now refers to me as Vice-chancellor and Principal. The Vice-chancellorship would be shed after two years and the Principalship a few years later. I would then be reduced to a mere citizen of Cawnpore."

That has now happened. The offices I then held were not part of me, they were mere appendages. They are gone, and this citizenship of Cawnpore which I then thought would stay, is it anything more than a mere appendage? It merely denotes a relation in which I happen to stand to other persons, residing in a particular area. But what am I apart from these relation-

ships ? When I look within, I am aware of my cognitions, my emotions, my activities. But even these have all an objective reference. I know about some object, feel about some object, and act on some object. Stripped of all relations, what am I ? And if I cannot be stripped of them, what is the ground of these relations ?

A similar question arises about the world outside. The most outstanding feature of the world outside is the vast number and variety of objects, another is the interaction of objects and the resulting change. The world, in the words of the Upanishads is 'name, form and action'. Are the objects really so many and so different as they appear ? Do they really act upon each other ? First, consider number. The table which I am now using is I say one single object. However, it has a top, four legs and four pieces that join the legs. It has a number of nails. Is the table one object, or a number of objects ? Similarly is a human body, containing millions of millions of cells, one object or a huge collection of objects ? The scientist tells us that the smallest object that we can see with the help of the most powerful microscope is a huge collection of atoms. Are these atoms all of one type ? Till recently, chemists believed in the existence of a number

of distinct types of atoms, but the present trend of thought, particularly among the physicists, is to accept the Sāṅkhya view that all matter is ultimately of one single type, and the apparent differences of kind are due to the varying number and arrangement of the component atoms.

The problem of change is more baffling. The fact of change is indubitable. Even the 'everlasting hills' crumble under the devastating influence of Time. Besides, the hills are whirling round in space, as part of the earth, as part of the solar system, as part of the bigger systems. Whence comes this motion, this activity of non-living, living and conscious objects? With these questions, the Kena or Talavakāra Upanishad concerns itself. It opens thus:—

"By whom impelled, does the mind plunge into its objects (by way of interaction)?

By whom ordained, does the primal Breath (Life) proceed to its function?

By whom impelled, do men utter this speech? Which is the god that impels the eye and the ear to perform their functions?"

The work of the mind referred to in the first question is done in connection with physical objects. The relation between mind and matter appears to be threefold: they may merely come

in contact with each other, or one may act on the other. Simple contact gives rise to cognition. A moment ago, when my gaze was fixed on the sheet of paper before me, I was not aware of the fly sitting on the wall behind me. Now that I turn my head backwards, I see the fly. This does not need further adjustment. Suppose, however, that, in place of the fly, I see a snake. I am thrown into a state of mental agitation, jump out of my seat, away from the wall. The object has changed my condition. In feeling or emotion, a part of the environment is aggressive and I am passive. Being at a safe distance, I hurl a stone at the snake. It hurts the snake and brings it down on the floor writhing. A part of the wall plaster also is damaged. Here, in my action, I am aggressive and a part of the environment is passive and suffers change. In simple contact, giving rise to cognition, work has been done by some sense organ. Now does the sense organ by itself act? Even a toy snake, not recognised as such, could frighten me, a flash of lightning can frighten me. How can these objects act? External objects affect the mind through the body, and the mind too affects them by first affecting the body. The problem of the relation between Mind and Matter is the prob-

lem of the relation between Mind and Body Common sense adopts a simple explanation of of the Mind-Body relation The mind acts upon the body and the body acts upon the mind. Both of them are active by nature. The relation between the two is that of interaction This explanation does not satisfy many people. They point to the disparity between mind and matter. The mind is conscious and matter is not; matter is extended and the mind is not. The distance that separates the two is 'the whole diameter of Being' Some of these people maintain that of the two, only Matter is active, and consciousness is an effect of certain changes in Matter Others hold that there is neither interaction, nor one-sided action; there is only a Parallelism: a material change can cause only another material change, and a psychic change another psychic change. It so happens, however, that both the series of changes run parallel to each other. How is this parallelism or 'pre-established harmony,' as it is called, produced?

So far as the external objects are concerned, we are aware of what happens to them Are these happenings mere *facts* or are they *acts*? Many philosophers and scientists are of the opinion that all we observe in Nature is a sequence of

events. We do not observe causality. This is only a subjective illusion, engendered by uniformity of sequence.

The Kena Upanishad assumes a distinction between mind and matter. It does not question the existence of causality, but it denies that natural objects can be causes. So far as the Self is concerned, causality in purely psychic acts does not seem to be challenged, in fact, the problem is left untouched. As regards physiological functions, which seem to involve mind's power over the body, the Upanishad seems to favour the view that the ultimate source of causal power here lies in *Brahman*. In regard to the so called natural forces or powers it is definitely of the view that the power which they are supposed to possess really belongs to *Brahman*. If we confine ourselves to natural occurrences, they are all *facts*, if we look beyond them, they are all *acts* of *Brahman*.

As regards physiological functions, we have the following

“He is not manifested by speech, but is the cause of speech manifesting (expressing meaning),

He is not manifested by thought, but enables thought to manifest. He does not see

by the eye, but enables the eye to see. He does not hear by the ear, but enables the ear to hear. He does not live by breathing, but enables the breath to function. He is the ear of the ear, the mind of the mind, the speech of speech, the life of life, the eye of the eye."

As regards the causation of natural phenomena, the position taken up is expressed in the form of an allegory.

"*Brahman* once won a victory for the gods (the so-called natural forces). The gods felt elated. They reflected, "This victory is ours; this majesty is ours."

Brahman knew about this reflection of the gods and appeared to them. They could not identify him and said, "Who is this Apparition?"

They turned to Agni and said, "Jātvedas (All knower), you go and find out who this Apparition is."

"Very well," so said Agni, and ran up to the Apparition. "Who art thou?" asked the Apparition.

"I am Agni, I am Jātvedas," replied Agni.

"Possessed of such a nature, what canst thou do?" asked the Apparition.

"I can consume all that there is on the earth," was the reply.

The Apparition placed a blade of grass before Agni and invited him to burn it

Agni rushed to the blade of grass with all fury and might, but could not burn it

Thereupon he went back and reported to the other gods that he had not been able to burn a blade of grass

The gods then turned to Vayu and asked him to go and ascertain about the Apparition

Vayu agreed and approached the Apparition

'Who art thou?', asked the Apparition

"I am Vayu, I am *matarisva* (abider in the sky)," said Vayu

What canst thou do?' asked the Apparition

"I can sweep away all that is on the earth," was the reply

The Apparition placed a blade of grass before Vayu and invited him to blow it away

Vayu rushed at the blade of grass, but could not blow it away

Disappointed he returned and made his report that he could not find out who the Apparition was. Then the gods turned to Indra and made the same request to him. He assented and approached the Apparition but the latter disappeared before him

There Indra met Umā, the daughter of Himāvat (*Brahmavidyā* or metaphysical knowledge, developed in the snow-clad hills in the North), who informed him that the Apparition was *Brahman*. The victory, in which they had been exulting, was in reality the victory of *Brahman*. *Brahman* is the fount of all natural force and energy, the ultimate ground of all causality in Nature.

CHAPTER V

SELF REALIZATION

Our life is an unceasing progression. It is *not mere change* ; it is a pursuit of ends. Most of these ends, as we have seen already, serve as means to other ends. To have a rational conception of life, we have to posit an ultimate end, an end which is not useful for anything other than itself, but possesses value in itself. Such an end is known as the *Summum Bonum* or the Highest Good. The determination of the nature of this Good was the main task of ethical enquiry in ancient India, as it was in ancient Greece. In modern times, the German philosopher, Immanuel Kant, has assigned the pride of place to Right in place of the Good, but the majority of ethical thinkers even today regard the Good as the primary ethical concept.

What is this *Summum Bonum* ? Some people think the question is unanswerable. The highest Good would be good without any qualification whatever - good everywhere, always, in all circumstances, *for everyone*. On account of our limitations, we are unable to know what

this good would be like Our experience is limited to particular situations, conditioned by time and space It is only on such situations that we can pass judgment Against this view, others urge that the very conception of *good* and *better*, without which we cannot proceed in ethical theory or practice, pre-supposes the existence of *the best* When I declare that one thing is better than another, I only mean that the first thing is nearer *the best* than the other is, or participates in the nature of *the best* in a larger measure than does the second As there are innumerable situations, there are innumerable relative 'bests,' but they all postulate the existence of *the Best*

Is the Highest Good essentially related to human consciousness? Some thinkers hold that even in an absolutely dead universe, there would be a difference between 'good' and 'bad,' and 'good' and 'better' The universe, as a work of Art, would be better than the same universe as a heap of rubbish Others cannot avoid the question—'better for whom?' The contemplation of Beauty does not merely enhance the value of Beauty, it also brings such value into existence Similarly, there can be no ethical good except in and for an ethical being. The highest good, so far as we can know it,

reveals itself in human life and experience. It consists in the realization of the true Self

What is this true Self and how does it differ from the false Self? Is the distinction ontological? If so, the true self is the self that exists; and the false self, the self that merely appears to exist. With this interpretation of the true self, what is the point in saying that it should be *realized*? It is already real. And what is the point in saying that the false self should not be realized? Being a mere illusion, it *cannot* be made real. The distinction is ethical.

Self-realization is contrasted to self-indulgence and self-conquest. In a way, both of these may be regarded as forms of self-realization. The votary of self-indulgence maintains that the self is essentially a sentient or a feeling self, and, in gratifying it, he does the best that he can possibly do. As against this, the rationalist maintains that the self is essentially rational, and its realization means the suppression or the control of the sentient self. They both really accept self-realization as the end, but differ as to the nature of the self. In his final discourse to his wife, Maitreyi, Yājñavalkya emphasizes this point. He maintains that *all desire, at bottom, is desire for self-realization.*

“Not for the sake of the husband is the husband dear to the wife, but for the sake of the Self is he dear. Not for the sake of the wife is the wife dear to the husband, but for the sake of the Self is she dear.” And so with regard to other objects that men are supposed to love. The meaning of the passage, it appears to me, is that the husband, in loving his wife, is really seeking to become a certain type of husband a loving husband, the wife, in loving her husband, seeks to be an affectionate wife, and the father, in loving his children, seeks to realize his ideal of what a father should be. In all these activities, which ostensibly are other regarding, the real aim is a certain transmutation of the self of the agent. The aim in all cases is the realization of the self. We defeat our purpose if we concentrate on a part, we succeed, if we concentrate on the whole. True self realization means the realization of the whole self. How can this be achieved?

To furnish an answer to this question is the special concern of the Mundaka Upanishad. The very name of the Upanishad is significant. *Mundaka* means what shaves one clean. The aim of the instruction given in the Upanishad is to remove all taint, all sin, all imperfection. This is what true self realization should primarily

mean. People who are over conscious of the inadequacy of opportunity available in the present life, or of the unhelpful character of the environment, look for the possibility of complete self-realization in a future state of existence—in a Paradise or a Heaven. But in picturing this Paradise, their imagination finds itself bound down to this earth. The Mohammedan paradise, as the late William James pointed out, is only ‘a place of sensuous enjoyment beyond the grave’. The Christian view only lays greater stress on social pleasures—in the anticipated company of our dear ones. True self realization, continues James, consists in cleansing the soul, in sinlessness, here or hereafter.

It has been said above that in realizing the self, the aim should be to realize the whole self. What are the elements of the self? Empirically considered, the self exhibits three features. It is cognitive, it is affective and it is conative or active. The intellectualist holds that, of these, cognition alone is fundamental, feeling is only a tone of cognitions, having merely an adjectival status, and conation is a character of cognition—all consciousness being motor. Some regard feeling as the primordial element. It appears, they say, earliest and is found most widely diffused. Yet others main-

tain that all life is fundamentally will. At the human level, too, it is so. feeling is only an index of success or failure of activity, and cognition, merely a light to provide some guidance to the will. The view commonly held by psychologists accepts all the three as fundamental aspects. In a complete realization of the Self, they should all be kept in view.

The process is a progressive movement to the final goal. In a journey, all stages are equally essential, though some of them have to be covered earlier than others. The Mundaka Upanishad recognises the following three stages in the process

- (a) Good conduct and austerity
- (b) Control of feelings and desires
- (c) Knowledge

(a) *Good conduct and austerity*

So long as the individual is not able to manage himself, he is to be managed by others. This is necessary for his *well being*, even for his *being*. His duties are prescribed for him. When the period of tutelage is over, he begins to manage himself. Strictly speaking, only now can he perform any duty. Morality implies freedom of action. Among these self imposed duties, there are some which are mainly religious, others mainly social. The former include worship and

performance of prescribed ritual, the latter, all acts of social utility. These last are not responses to the legally recognised claims of individuals, they are responses to the unenforcible claims of the community as a whole. These two branches of Duty are known as *ishtha* and *purta*.

"Conduct" said Mathew Arnold, "is three fourths of life." In a sense, it is the whole of life. From the social point of view, it is of supreme significance. For others, I am what I *do*. From the ethical point of view, I am much more than what I do. 'The vulgar mass, called work,' 'things done, that take the eye and have 'the price' are less important than the 'purposes' of the man, even though the purposes fail to be translated into action. These purposes may not weigh as the man's work, and yet they 'swell his amount' in the eyes of God. In moral progress, the transition is from *doing* to *being*, from *conduct* to *character*. The Upanishad places the formation of a strong, virtuous character on a higher plane than the performance of prescribed duties and doing meritorious, benevolent deeds. Character does not drop to us as a gift from heaven, nor can it be transferred by one man to another. Everyone has to develop it for himself. Character has been defined as a

‘completely fashioned Will’ the fashioning is to be done by the individual himself. It needs a certain amount of austerity (*tapas*). As we go through the process, we find it troublesome and don’t see much value in it. It is like paying a premium on a life policy. So long as all goes well, it appears that the gain is all on the side of the insurance company. But all may not go well. When troubles do come, the man of the strong will, fashioned by austerity, can keep on his feet, the man who has preferred to remain comfortable is carried away like chaff. *Ishta, purta* and *tapas* form the first requisite for self realisation.

(b) Control of feelings and desires

Feelings and desires are an essential element in our nature. They cannot be eradicated. Even if they could be, it would be bad economy to eradicate them. They are a dynamic element in our life. They should be harnessed rather than be destroyed. Like fire, our passions are good servants, but bad masters. When uncontrolled, they may prove our ruin. Probably each man has some specific weakness, his ‘besetting sin’. It is for him to find it out and try to overcome it. If the boat leaks even at one point, it will go down, and generally it is not material where it leaks. But there are certain parts of the boat

which, as a rule, are weaker than others. So, in our constitution, there are certain weak spots. The Bhagavad Gitā speaks of lust, anger and greed as the three doors to hell. Of these, lust is generally regarded as our worst foe. In the Upanishad, control of lust, *brahmacharya*, is declared to be of the first importance. If one can control this, the control of other passions is comparatively simple.

(c) *Knowledge.*

On the cognitive side, knowledge is our main need. All knowledge is not of equal value. I may undertake to count the number of leaves on the trees in the city, or the number of hair on the bodies of some school children. This will keep me engaged for the remaining years of my life, but what else will it mean to me or to anyone else? - The knowledge we seek to acquire must be appropriate knowledge, knowledge that has some value. The highest value is attached by the Mundaka Upanishad, as by other Upanishads, to the knowledge of God. This knowledge is a saving knowledge.

“Two birds united, close companions, dwell on the same tree. One of the two enjoys the sweet fruit of the tree; the other eats not, but merely looks on. Dwelling on the self-same tree, the

CHAPTER VI

DESTINY OF THE INDIVIDUAL

We look ahead This is due to the position of our eyes in the body In the sphere of mental life, too, we look ahead We live in the present, but the present, itself the *fruit* of the past, is regarded as the seed of the future Our main interest in the seed is for the sake of the tree into which it will eventually grow The present is a point, at most a limited span, the future, in contrast to it, is extensive The present is determinate, the future, we think, can to some extent be determined by us We look ahead, because to do so is a paying proposition

This happens in our daily life, in regard to particular situations What about life, taken as a whole? Do we 'look before and after' only within the bounds of our present life, or do we go beyond these bounds as well? Innocent childhood is untroubled by such a question, and the brutes, finished clods' that they are, are undisturbed by Doubt in regard to it But man, when intelligence has been stirred in him, asks this question, and cannot rest satisfied till he has

found some kind of answer to it, or persuaded himself that no answer is possible

Probably, we could expect that an earnest seeker after Truth, like Naciketas, would like to have an answer to this question as his final boon from Yama (the Lord of the realm of Death) In a beautiful allegory, the Katha Upanishad (Chapter 1, Sec 1) brings us face to face with the problem of the Hereafter

“Vajasravasa gave away all he possessed as a religious gift The gift included a number of cows that had ‘drunk their water, eaten their grass, given their milk and were now barren’ When Naciketas, the son of Vājasravasa, saw this, he was deeply grieved He thought that such cows would be a liability, rather than an asset, to the recipient of the gift He approached his father and said

“Father, unto whom are you giving me away ?”

The father made no answer

The son repeated his question a second and yet a third time

“Unto Death shall I give you !” said the father

Naciketas reflected “Death is a normal occurrence I go in the midst of many, and many will follow me, but of what use can I be to Death ?”

He lived to the abode of Death. For three nights, he was there without food. At the end of this period, Death said to him: "You have been here for three nights without food. Choose three boons: I shall grant them."

Naciketas said: "When I go back hence, may my father recognise me, pacified, kind and free from anger towards me! This is the first boon I ask"

The boon was readily granted.

Naciketas: "Teach me the Sacrifice that leads men to heaven, where there is no fear of old age and of death (where you are not, Yama!), where one is not troubled by hunger, thirst or sorrow. This is the second boon I ask"

Yama granted him this boon also; taught him all about the sacrifice, and, to make his gift more gracious, told him that the sacrifice in question would be associated with the name of Naciketas.

Naciketas: "When a man dies, some say 'He exists,' while others say—'He exists not.' What is the truth about the matter? This is the third boon I ask"

Yama replied "This is a subtle point; it is difficult to grasp; even the *devas* (gods or wise men) in the past had doubts about it. Abandon this

and ask for another boon. Ask for a long life, long-lived progeny, extensive territories, wealth, live-stock, charming damsels and other pleasing things, beyond the reach of man. I shall give you anything you want : only, worry me not about this subtle question."

Naciketas : "Keep these things to yourself: they do not appeal to me. You are the best teacher to instruct me on this point. I will have this boon and no other. Instruct me."

Here ends the allegory. The next section does not say so explicitly, but is obviously Yama's reply to Naciketas. Before we take up its consideration, it may not be amiss to make an observation or two on the allegory itself. It shows, in a vivid form, the earnestness of Naciketas, an ideal seeker after Truth; it gives us, in advance, the contrast between the two kinds of good that men generally pursue. The instructor selected is none other than Yama himself. The question of the Hereafter is, at bottom, the question of the real meaning of Death. It is the fact of Death that raises the question: it is to Death that we must address ourselves for an answer. As regards Naciketas' visit to the abode of Death and remaining there without food for three nights, a belief of this kind seems to have been fairly com-

mon at a certain stage of cultural development. Before heaven and hell were definitely separated as abodes for the virtuous and the vicious after death, all souls were supposed to go to a common abode—Hades. In certain circumstances, some living persons had an opportunity to visit the abode of the dead. The main ends in these visits were to bring back some departed soul, to seek light on some problem or to ask for some boon. If the visitor could remain there without food for three days, he was eligible to ask for the favour, and, later, to return to the realm of the living: if he ate anything during this period of three days, he lost his chance of returning to the earth. Naciketas went to the abode of Death, stayed there for three nights without taking any food, earned his right to ask for the boons and was granted them. The Upanishad has clothed the belief in some charming imagery.

The second section opens thus.

“The Good is one thing and the Pleasant another. Both having different objects chain a man. It is well with the man who chooses the Good; he who chooses the Pleasant, misses his aim.

The Good and the Pleasant approach man. The wise man distinguishes between them and

prefers the Good to the Pleasant, but the fool, deluded by his calculations, prefers the Pleasant

Far apart are these two from each other—Ignorance and Wisdom

Fools who dwell in darkness, but fancy themselves to be wise and learned, go round and round, erratic, like blind men led by the blind. To the careless, immature mind, deluded with the delusion of wealth, the way to the Hereafter is not apparent. 'This world exists, none other exists'—thinking thus, he is again and again subject to Death's sway. Only a few have an opportunity to hear about the nature of the Self. Of those that hear about it, not many are able to comprehend it. Rare indeed is the teacher who can teach on the subject, and equally rare the disciple who can comprehend the teaching" * (II. 1,2,4,5—7)

This reads quite good, but how is this, the reader may well ask, a satisfactory answer to

* "In everyone of us," says Plato, "there are two ruling and directing principles, whose guidance we follow wherever they may lead, the one being an innate devise of pleasure; the other an acquired judgment which aspires after excellence. Now these two principles at one time maintain harmony, while at another they are at feud within us, and now one and now the other obtains the mastery."

(Phaedrus; Translation by J. Wright.)

the question of Naciketas? This needs a little elucidation

Naciketas' question was this

“When a man dies, some say, ‘He exists,’ while others say, ‘He exists not’ What is the truth about the matter?”

Let us first amplify the question a little On the survival of personality after death, there is a real difference of opinion some deny such survival, while others affirm it Those who deny it may be classed under the following categories —

(1) Those who maintain that really there is no distinction between the Spirit and the Body The only distinction there is is between *activities* and this is transferred to objects “When I think, I am Spirit, when I walk, I am Body” When the body is dissipated as a result of death, the whole person passes away

—(2) Those who do not reduce the difference between spirit and body to a mere difference of names, but assign a more substantial being to matter than to the spirit In their opinion, matter does really exist, and mind or consciousness is only an effect produced by certain changes occurring in a certain piece of matter (the brain) A variant of this view looks upon consciousness as a phenomenon, accompanying those particular bodily changes,

just as a shadow accompanies a running train. When the body perishes, consciousness necessarily vanishes. "When the flute is broken, the music is gone."

There are others who believe in immortality in a specified sense, but deny personal immortality. Of these, some believe in *biological immortality*. Through the germ plasm, the father lives in the son and in the son's son and so on indefinitely. Each individual receives the germ plasm from his father and, through him, from his grandfather, and through the grandfather, from his great-grandfather, and ultimately from his very first progenitor. This is the doctrine of Heredity.

Some hold that though the individual passes away, the species continues. They believe in *corporate immortality*. "Like corn, the mortals ripen, and, like corn, they are born again." The trees come and go; the forest remains. Men are not immortal; man is.

There are others who believe in the immortality of Action. According to the Buddhist, it is Action and not an immaterial substance called the Soul, that transmigrates from one body to another. Life and death are continuous: birth here means death elsewhere and death here means birth elsewhere. The law of Karma means

that every action must live on in its effects. A variant of this view recognises the immortality of the individual through the influence he exercises on his contemporaries and the succeeding generations. Particularly is this held to be true about the good deeds. Their effect, it is said, never passes away. "The evil that men do is oft interred with their bones, the good they do lives after them."

The Pantheist also believes in a certain form of immortality, though he denies personal immortality. "Just as the different streams flow into the sea and there lose their respective 'names and forms,' and become the sea itself," so do the human souls flow from *Brabman* and flow back into *Brabman*. None of them can be absolutely lost.

It is not about immortality in any of these senses that Naciketas wants to know. He wants to know whether the individual survives death, *as a self-conscious person*. Yama understands his meaning. The reply is that the problem of personal immortality is to be solved on *ethical* grounds. If *Ethics* can sustain a belief in immortality, the belief is valid, otherwise, it is not. In modern times, this position was taken up by Immanuel Kant. He included belief in immor-

talities among the implications of Morality. My conscience tells me that I should perfect myself. Either the voice of conscience is a mere delusion, or it is not. If it is, Ethics vanishes altogether; if it is not, perfection of the Self should be a realizable end. Our present life certainly is not adequate for the purpose. Nay, as the end is *infinite*, it needs *infinite time* to realize it. This is only another way of saying that the finite spirit, the pursuer of an infinite end, must be conceived as immortal.

From the ethical point of view, the crux of the whole matter is the nature of the moral Ideal. Is it Pleasure or Perfection? The Upanishad declares that these two are distinct and that perfection is the true end of human endeavour. Here again, Kant is in complete agreement with the view expressed in the Upanishad. Why is the pursuit of Pleasure rejected as an ethical ideal? The claims of Pleasure can be judged on *a posteriori* or on *a priori* grounds. The Hedonist relies on *a posteriori* grounds. Experience, he says, teaches us that everyone, in the last resort, accepts Pleasure to be the sole aim of human endeavour—Pleasure somewhere, at some time, of some one. The Rationalist, on the other hand, relies on *a priori* considerations. The Good, he says, must

and impure, never reaches the goal he enters into the round of birth

On the other hand, he who has understanding, is mindful and pure, reaches the goal, whence he does not return to be born again" (III 3 8)

The last two verses make the position of the Upanishad in regard to the question of survival quite clear. The Soul does not die. The difference between the virtuous and the wicked is that the wicked go the round of birth and death, whereas the souls that have realized themselves escape this cycle.

"The Soul is not born, nor does it die. It sprang from nothing, nor does anything spring from it. Unborn, eternal, without decay, the Soul is not slain, though the body is slain.

He who looks upon the Soul as a slayer, and he who looks upon it as slain, are both deluded. The Soul neither slays, nor is slain"—(II 18 19)

The difference is not between mortal souls and immortal souls, but between souls which are chained to worldly objects, and so doomed to a cycle of births and deaths, and the souls which, by virtue of self purification, devotion and concentration, have broken the chains and won freedom.

CHAPTER VII

THUS SPOKE PIPPALĀDA

The Praśna Upanishad is quite simple in its structure. Six inquirers approach Pippalāda, with a view to seeking light on certain problems—each on one specific problem. Pippalāda answers their questions. There is no discussion on the problems: it is all asking on one side and answering on the other. And the asking is limited to the bare propounding of a question at the start. The answers are partly couched in mythological and symbolic language, and are, in some cases, not as illuminating as one would wish them to be. However, we get enough out of Pippalāda. What seems to me to be quite significant is the character of the questions and the order in which they are put. They cover a wide range and imply an appreciation of a vertical gradation in the the world of Reality. In Philosophy, the nature of the questions propounded is no less important than the answers furnished. The answers, as given by different thinkers, are bound to differ: what makes Philosophy a determinate branch of knowledge is the set of problems that importunately demand a solution.

(1) Kavandhin sets the ball rolling by propounding the *cosmogonic problem*—Whence are these creatures produced ?

Three cosmogonic views are fairly well known. According to the first, the substance and the form of things are both eternal, according to the second, the substance is eternal, but the form has been changing, according to the third, both the substance and the form came into being on a certain occasion as the outcome of the Will of God. The unsophisticated layman holds the first view, the evolutionist, the second view; and the ordinary Christian or Muslim, the third view. For the Philosophers, the problem concerns the nature of Being and Becoming, or the One and the Many. Among the early Greeks, the creation of the world was the principal speculative problem. They mainly relied on one form or another of Matter. Anaxagoras struck a new note. According to him, the different kinds of matter are all ultimate. They were all intermingled and in absolute chaos. The process of world formation consists in their gradual unmixing, in the segregation of different kinds from one another. In such a mass, there is potentiality of change, but the change so produced would be purposeless. In order that an ordered system, a cosmos,

be produced, the change must be directed by Intelligence. Otherwise, only one chaos would be succeeded by another chaos. Anaxagoras was the first among the early Greeks to emphasize the need of an Intelligence guiding the process of world-formation. For this new note struck by him, Aristotle declared that he was the only seeing man among the blind. Pippalāda also starts with this idea. "Prajapati was desirous of having offspring. He performed austerity (reflected) and produced a couple—*rayī* and *prāna*. These two, he thought, would produce offspring in many ways." In order to produce any offspring, the two had to be united. Of these, *prāna* (life) is the dominant element: it impregnates the other element *rayī*. *Prāna* is aggressive, *rayī* is passive. In the production of objects, the roles they play may be likened to the roles of the sperm and the ovary in the making of an embryo. As illustrations of the difference between the two, it is said that the sun is *prāna*, and the moon, *rayī*; the half-year, when the sun is in the north, is *prāna*, and the other half-year, when the sun turns to the south, is *rayī*; the day is *prāna*, and the night *rayī*: in each case *prāna* is the seat of greater vitality. The nearest approach to the meaning of the two terms in English

is made by "Form" and "Matter" (raw material) The idea of creation being due to the union or interaction of two opposed principles has attracted some philosophers in the west also Almost irresistibly, Aristotle's conception of Form and Matter draws attention to itself Aristotle criticised Plato's Theory of Ideas as an explanation of the created world According to Plato's theory, over against the realm of individual objects, there is the world of Ideas All the horses are copies of the Ideal horse, all men, of the Ideal man Aristotle's objection to the theory was that, instead of explaining the world we see, it postulates another world, which itself needs an explanation According to Aristotle, the individual object is the result of the union of Form and Matter, the Universal and the Particular These two are not separate entities, but two distinct, opposed principles, which, in actual fact are found together. Form without Matter and Matter without Form are both mere abstractions Matter is what becomes something; that which it becomes is the Form The resulting object is the union of the two This sounds very much like the statement of Pippalāda that the progeny of Prajāpati, the created objects, are the result of the union of two principles—*prāna* and *rayī*

Among the moderns, Schopenhauer's distinction between the Will and the Idea comes very close to the distinction between *prana* and *rayī*. Every determination, says Schopenhauer, is the result of two determining factors, the Will and the Idea, and, of these, the Will is the more active, aggressive factor. The scientific concepts of mass and energy also correspond to *rays* and *prana*.

(2) From Cosmology, we pass to the consideration of a small object on one small planet—the human body. Bhārgava put the second question to Pippalāda —

“How many *devas* (organs) sustain the Body? How many illumine and manifest it? Which of them is the most eminent?”

The human body is a piece of matter. Its ultimate constituents are the same as those of other material objects—ether, air, fire, water and earth. However, this piece of matter is an organised piece and shows a high degree of differentiation in structure and function. The differentiation is accompanied by an equally high degree of integration. The life of the Body largely consists in its interaction with other bodies. In order that this interaction be biologically fruitful, it is necessary that the Body be equipped with a suitable

mechanism for apprehending the environment, and a mechanism for acting upon it. To use familiar terms, it must have developed organs of knowledge and organs of action. And to coordinate the functions of these two classes of organs, it must have a coordinating agent—the Mind. As samples, Pippalada mentions the Eye and the Ear as organs of knowledge, and Speech as an organ of action. He also mentions the Mind as the coordinating agent. To the first two parts of the question put by Bhargava, his answer is as follows —

“The *devas* are the ether, the air, the fire, the water and the earth, Speech, Mind, Eye and Ear.” Which of these is the most eminent? The *devas*, says the Upanishad, disputed among themselves, each claiming to be the main support of the Body. The principle of Life (*prana*) told them that they were all deluded. *prana* itself was the support of the Body. The organs were sceptical. *Prana* gave them a decisive demonstration and they found that “when *it* left the Body, they all left it, and so long as *it* stayed, they stayed too. As the bees leave the hive when the sovereign leaves and stay there when the sovereign stays, so was it with the organs in relation to *prana*.”

The pre-eminence of *prāṇa*, as shown by its indispensability, is a favourite topic in the Upanishads. It is expounded in a more elaborate description in the Bṛhadāranya Upanishad, but the idea is expressed with sufficient explicitness even in the Praśna Upanishad.

(3) Kauśalya wants to know more about *Prāṇa*, or the life process in general and its differentiation in subsidiary processes. He put the following questions to Pippalāda.

“Whence is *Prāṇa* born?

What determines its entry into a particular body?

How does it make its exit?

How does it maintain its relation to what is external? And how to the Self?

We often hear about Matter, Life and Mind. We see lifeless objects, plants and animals. Lifeless objects and conscious beings stand on very different planes. Plants come in between them. Can we assimilate them to either of the other two categories? It is possible to look upon them as matter that has arrived at a certain stage of organisation, on the other hand, it is possible to regard them as possessing consciousness of a very low intensity or of a completely non-communicative character. If we do not accept life

The close resemblance of these processes to the working of the *various* systems recognised by modern Physiology will be easily noted. The nature of *udana* is not free from obscurity. It "rises from the sole of the foot to the crown of the head." When a man departs this life, *udana* passes out through *Susumnā* (the coronal artery) and leads the individual self to the destiny it has prepared for itself—the virtuous to a good state, the vicious to a place of sin, and those of mixed nature again to "the world of men."

As regards the fourth point, the relation of the individual body to the world outside, *Pippalāda* holds that there is a correspondence between the microcosm (man's body) and the macrocosm (the world). Corresponding to the five *pranas* in the human body, there are the several forces in the external world. As regards the relation of *prāṇa* to the spirit, the *prāṇa* provides the basis and the instrument with the help of which the spirit shapes its future.

(4) From Physiology, *Gārgya* leads us to the realm of Psychology. The relation between the two is so close that some people regard Psychology as a branch of Physiology. This is, however, as illegitimate as the reduction of Physiology to a branch of Physics. When we are interacting

with the environment, knowing it by means of the cognition-organs or acting on it by means of the action-organs, we are said to be in a waking state. We are, however, not always in this state. Some part of every day, we are not waking. Then, too, we have a certain type of existence. It is on this that Gārgya seeks light from Pippalāda. He propounds his question as follows:—

“What are the organs that sleep in a person?
 What are the organs that remain awake?
 What *deva* is it that sees the dreams?
 Who enjoys the blissful state?
 Who supports all these organs?”

When I am asleep, certain functions are suspended. I do not see, hear or smell; I do not move about or talk to others. The organs of action and of cognition are, so to say, asleep. But the vital functions are not suspended. My stomach works, in fact sleep of the organs of knowledge and action may be helpful to digestion and absorption. My lungs and heart go on working. The organs, known as vital *prāṇas*, do not suspend functioning—they remain awake. When we are awake, the mind coordinates the work of the cognition-organs and guides the work of the action-organs. Does it too go to sleep? We are all familiar with the phenomenon of Dreams. How does dream-

life differ from waking life? The organs of cognition and action do not work when we are in a state of dreaming, but the mind is certainly active. What is the material on which it works? It is not perceptual experience, but the images of previously experienced percepts. Sometimes the past is simply reproduced. This, however, is generally not the case. Dreams are the result of productive imagination. The elements of these products are taken from the actual experience of waking life, but the arrangements in which they are presented are novel. There are other distortions as well. We are generally struck by the fantastic character of dreams. This only means that the mind in the dream-state is more unfettered than in the waking state. In the latter case, the world of reality is there to check the vagaries of the mind; in the dream-state, this checking is not exercised. This aspect of the dream-consciousness has been expressed in modern times in the view that *dreams are fulfilments of wishes unfulfilled in the waking life*. When awake, we find our powers circumscribed within narrow limits. In the state of dreams, these limits are partially removed, and the mind acts with greater freedom—in other words, with a sense of greater power.

The first three parts of Gargya's question are thus answered by Pippalada —

“As the rays of the Sun, when setting, all become one in the Sun, and are dispersed again and again, with the rising of the Sun, even so is all this merged in the highest *deva*, the mind. During sleep, the Soul (*purusa*) hears not, sees not, smells not, tastes not, touches not, it does not speak, nor take, nor enjoy, nor evacuate, nor move. It is then said to be asleep.

But the fires of the vital airs (*prana*) keep awake in the city (body, the abode of the spirit) ”

“In sleep, the mind has the sense of power. Whatever it has seen, it sees again, whatever it has heard, it hears again, whatever has been experienced in different places and regions, it experiences again. What has been seen and what has not been seen, what has been heard and has not been heard, what has been experienced and has not been experienced, both the actual and the non-actual (*sat* and *asat*) it experiences all. It is all ”

Is our whole life divided between waking and dreaming? Besides these two, the ordinary man posits the dreamless sleep. In fact, the generally accepted view is that the major part of sleep, in a normally healthy man, is passed in a

dreamless state I am not quite sure whether there is such a state as dreamless sleep, certainly, there is no way to prove it. The metaphysician who holds that consciousness is the essence of mind, just as extension is the essence of matter, would deny the existence of such a state, for, to him, an unconscious mind is no mind at all. On psychological grounds, too, there is a difficulty. We are all aware that, on the whole, dreams are forgotten much quicker than experiences of waking life. Is it not possible that dreams are like the smoke emerging from a chimney, which gets fainter and fainter till it becomes quite unnoticeable? Is it not possible that we are dreaming throughout the period of our sleep, but the dream is evanescent and we remember only the last portion of it?

The view expressed in the Upanishads, and in the present case, by Pippalāda, is that a state of dreamless sleep does exist. However, far from being a state of unconsciousness, it is a state of an exalted, blissful consciousness. The Self in the waking state is thoroughly immersed in the world of objects, in the state of dream, this contact is very much weakened. The Self partially withdraws itself from the world. When even images of objects, as experienced in dreams,

disappear, and the Self is alone—with itself only, the withdrawal from the objective world is complete. The self is conscious, only its consciousness is not objective. If we could use such an expression, we may say that though there is no *consciousness*, there is *sciousness*.

It is also possible to view the state of dreamless sleep as a *condition of the Self* when all limitations to consciousness are removed, when "the self is overwhelmed with light (*tejas*)". We generally refer to our sense-organs as "gateways of wisdom," as the windows through which we have peeps at the outside world. Through the eye, we see colours, light and forms, through the ear, we hear sounds, through the nose, we experience odours, through the tongue, tastes, and through the skin, heat, cold, smoothness and roughness. Using language with which modern science has made us familiar, we may say that seeing is our reaction to certain vibrations impinging on our eye, hearing, our reaction to certain other vibrations impinging on the drum of our ear. But these vibrations are not the only vibrations that can or do occur in ether or air. There probably are and certainly may be other vibrations to which we do not respond, because we lack appropriate organs to receive them. Those to which our

organism responds form an insignificant fraction of those to which it does not. Our body can be regarded from two different points of view—(a) as a vehicle of knowledge of certain aspects of the world, and (b) as a screen that keeps out of our view innumerable aspects of the same world. Our sense-organs *limit* our knowledge in another way. All perception is essentially selective. When I perceive one object, I must be wholly or partially oblivious of other objects. Attention to one object implies inattention to other objects. The so-called gate ways of wisdom give us knowledge, but each of them when it is functioning, tends to monopolise our attention and thus circumscribes the field of our cognition. When we pass from the waking state to the dream state, the restrictions are partly relaxed. The sense organs do not act. However, we retain the effects of their functioning—in the form of images of the percepts. These images, too, act as restrictive agencies, though the restrictions are not so rigid as those imposed by percepts. When we pass from the dream state to the state of dreamless sleep, even these secondary restrictions disappear. Then we are “overwhelmed with light,” nothing distracts our attention against anything else. We are conscious, but our consciousness is

not *selective* consciousness "When the self is overwhelmed with light (*tejas*) and sees no dreams, then is attained the state of bliss (dreamless sleep)"

(5) With Satyakāma, we pass to Religion. He inquires about the results of religious meditation—meditation on Om.

The object of meditation in religion is God. How is God to be conceived? What we generally do is to idealise human perfections and regard them as attributes of God. A certain amount of anthropomorphism is an inevitable consequence of our mental constitution. But we fall into grievous error, if we regard God as merely a magnified Man. Among men power strikes us as possessing outstanding significance. All living beings seem to be hungering and struggling for power. If an individual cannot succeed against A and B, he tries against C or D. There are always some whom he may overpower. When intelligence appears on the stage, it becomes a great source of power. A young boy can lead a row of laden camels, who helplessly follow him because they have not the sense to rid themselves of the string that draws them after him. In the pre-social state, power and wisdom are *the* strong points in an individual. When man is socialised, ethical attributes come to the front. A man, truly to be a man,

must be a *'good'* man. Power, wisdom, goodness—these are also the attributes which men generally attribute to God. Mohammadanism lays great stress, almost exclusive stress, on the Power of God. God is pictured as an irresponsible Autocrat ; above and unmindful of any Law, moved only by His Will (or Impulse, shall we call it ?) Christianity lays greater stress on God's goodness. In goodness, it exalts a particular feature—Love—above every other feature. "God is Love." And Love is interpreted very much in its human sense. Love is proverbially blind. It does not judge strictly. This conception is fundamental in Christian theology. The doctrines of man's fall and redemption by atonement are closely connected with it. The first man, Adam, disobeyed God. For this, he was expelled from heaven and condemned to a life of toil on this earth. All his children share his sin and suffering. We are all born sinners, and the sin is so great that we *cannot* wash ourselves clean of it. God's justice can be satisfied only by damning mankind to eternal tortures in Hell. But God is Love, and, as a loving father, must do something to avert this fate earned by man. Out of the infinity of His love, He expiates for man's sin by His own suffering through the crucifixion of Christ. Punishment

is a just consequence of transgression. God enacts this moral law and enforces it. But the punishment, in this case, being too great for the frail man, God inflicts it on Himself. This is a travesty of Justice. Justice does not merely mean that punishment will follow transgression, it also means that the punishment will fall *on the transgressor*. It is *his* due. We may even say, with Hegel, that it is his *right*, of which no one can deprive him. In its anxiety to emphasize God's love, Christian theology forgets that He is Just.

Man's redemption through vicarious atonement is a stumbling block to many Christian theologians. Those who are not professed theologians find in it an inexplicable mystery. And when some explanation is offered, it is often no less puzzling than the dogma itself. We may, as an illustration, refer to Robert Browning's interpretation. According to Browning, God made man and endowed him with some excellences. These excellences, however, were nothing to the corresponding excellences in God. Man, the creature, was very inferior to his creator. Man did, however, develop a certain excellence—sympathy and suffering—which raised him higher than God Himself. Here, in one respect at any rate, the creature was greater than the creator. God wanted

to remove this anomaly and made a stupendous sacrifice, absolutely beyond human reach and capacity. Through this sacrifice—the crucifixion of Christ—God re-established His divine position ! A good snub to man's impertinence ?

Pippalada declares that meditation on God should be through the symbol Om (Aum). Each of the three component letters of Aum (A, U, and M) stands for a certain aspect of the Divine nature. Meditation on one aspect of it (represented by the letter A) leads to a good reward, meditation on two aspects (represented by A and U) has greater merit, but one must meditate on all the three aspects for the highest merit and highest bliss. Pippalada does not say what these aspects are, probably because his visitors were supposed to know it. The Mandūkya Upanishad refers to them and understands them after the analogy of different forms of human consciousness—waking state, dream state and dreamless sleep. The three aspects in Divine nature are referred to as Vaiśvanara, Taijasa and Prajñā. As Vaiśvanara, He is the Ruler and Controller of all, as Taijasa, He is pure Effulgence, the source of all Light, as Prajñā, He is All knowing, Omniscient.

(6) The sixth and the last question is asked by Sukesha. He asks about the spirit with the sixteen parts.

Pippalāda replies as follows —

“The Person or Spirit in whom the sixteen parts arise abides in the Body

.....

He created Life (prāna) (1)

From prāna, he produced dynamic Faith or urge for action 2),

The Gross Elements—Ether, Air, Light, Waters, Earth (3-7),

The Sense Organ (8),

Mind (9),

Food (10)

From Food, He produced

Vitality (generative power) (11),

Austerity (12),

Sacred hymns (worship and prayer) (13),

Fruit-bearing Deeds (sacrifice and other prescribed duties) (14),

Resultant conditions (15)

From these conditions, he produced Name (Individuality) (16)

When all these parts re-merge into the spirit from which they arise, they lose their individuality, just as streams falling into the sea lose their individuality, and become indistinguishable from the sea. Then, only the spirit remains, without parts and immortal.”

Pippalada here refers to the evolution and involution of the apparatus that the Spiritfashions for itself

As in the Sankhya system, the evolution of the world, according to Pippalada, is teleological. Its purpose is to help the Spirit in its upward march, in the task of the unfoldment of its powers. And when this service has been rendered, the apparatus is no longer needed and relapses into the formless stuff from which it arose.

The apparatus has sixteen parts. The first to arise is the principle of Life or *prana*. This life must become dynamic, it must develop an inner urge to action. This is *shraddha*. Life, as so transformed, must have a physical basis. The next batch of evolutes consists of the five physical ingredients—ether, air, light, water and earth. They provide material for the body that the spirit is to animate. The human body is not a mere piece of matter. It is a psycho physical organism. It must have organs (of cognition and action) and the coordinating mind. Organs and mind are the next pair of evolutes.

The Body can in emergency, sustain itself by consuming itself. This, however, is only a temporary expedient. Every fast, when prolonged enough, is a *fast to death*. Life can sustain itself

only when it can secure nutrition. Food, quite naturally, is the next product.

The Spirit now has at its disposal a Body, with differentiated organs and attendant consciousness and also Food to sustain the Body. Now begins the next stage.

The Body takes in Food. This gives rise to Virility or Libido. This is the main force at the disposal of the Organism. What is its value for the individual Spirit? In itself, it is neutral, unmoral. Its value depends on how it operates. Is it riotous, undisciplined, unprincipled? If so, the individual is lost. If on the other hand, it is disciplined and swayed by certain principles, it provides invaluable aid in spiritual growth. According to a popular school of modern Psychology, it is the source of almost all that is valuable in our culture—Poetry, Art and Religion.

How is this Virility to be disciplined and trained?

Pippalāda mentions three means—Austerity, Worship and Prayer, and performance of prescribed duties. These three are the next products. They turn Virility into an ally. With the help of this ally, so disciplined, or, we might say, with the help of these, three, desirable consequences or resulting conditions are produced. When this

has taken place, the Spirit has acquired a name, a distinct individuality. It has come to the end of its march to the goal of self realization. The apparatus has rendered the service for which it was fashioned.

Once again, here are the sixteen parts of the Apparatus that the Spirit fashions for itself —

“He created Life (prana) (1). From prana, he produced dynamic faith or urge to action (2), the gross elements—ether, air, light, water and earth (3—7), the sense Organ (8), Mind (9) and Food (10). From Food, he produced Virility (11), Austerity (12), Sacred hymns (worship and prayer) (13), Fruit Bearing Deeds (14) and the resulting conditions (15). From these conditions, arose Name or Individuality (16).”

Having dealt with this, the last, question, Pippalada concludes thus —“Only this much do I know about Brahman, and there is nothing more to know.”

CHAPTER VIII

EDUCATIONAL PROCESS AND AIMS

Education, it has been said, is the main key industry of a country. All industrial and non industrial work, comprised under social utility services, is to be done by men who are properly equipped for the work. Education equips them for it. The individual worker, while he makes a contribution to efficient communal life, also serves himself. His work provides him with a comfortable living. Education, however, does not merely enable the individual to make a living or to play a part in the communal life, it also enables him to live a decent life. Vocational education enables a man to make a living, liberal education enables him to live well. Both these are needed to make a man well educated. The foundations must be 'well and truly laid'.

Education comprises instruction and training. In our present system of education, excessive, almost exclusive, stress is laid on instruction at the expense of training. And instruction is understood to mean *injection*—injection of facts and ready-made opinions. The student is expected to keep

them well secured in his memory for his examination. Dominated as it is by public examinations, conducted for large numbers of students, scattered over a wide area, our education tends to mould all minds in determinate patterns, to standardise them. This suppresses all originality and independence of thought. To be on the safe ground, the student is anxious to memorise others' opinions and pass them on as his own. This engenders a sense of diffidence, an inferiority complex. The business of the teacher in a rational system of education is to help the student to work for himself. The student should be led to study a subject and not merely to read a book. Socrates used to say that he was not a mother, but only a midwife. The mother gives birth to the child, the midwife only assists her in doing it. As a teacher, said Socrates, his business was not to provide truth to the youth of Athens, but to lead them to discover it for themselves. Education needs active cooperation between the student and the teacher, and the role of the student is the more active. A school or a college is a place where students learn, rather than a place where teachers teach. Others can teach us very little, our education is largely self education.

Whatever help the teacher can give to the

student can be best given by stimulating talk or discourse. Teaching books by mere paraphrasing (turning good language into bad) is no substitute for stimulating discourse. It is only in such discourse that a topic can be really developed and seen from different view points. As regards training, the present woeful neglect of it is due mainly to two causes —(a) excessive demands of purely examination work, which hardly leaves any time for any kind of self expression, and (b) the absence of intimate contact between the teacher and the student. The teacher generally meets his students in the class-room, where all the time is to be faithfully devoted to the task assigned in the time-table. The opportunities of intimate contact among the students themselves are very limited. This defect can be remedied by the residential system adopted in some modern universities. In a poor country like India, where high education is almost the only pass port to success in life for the middle class, and consequently the demand for such education is unrestricted, a very general adoption of the costly residential system is not practicable. In ancient India, life was not so complex as it is to day, and education was not sought as an investment. Both instruction and training could then be secured more easily than

now For instruction, emphasis was placed mainly on independent study and discourse For training, residence in the school, under the fostering care of the teacher and in rigid discipline, was relied upon Virtue, it has been said, is not taught, but caught. This is also true of character in the wider sense Active participation in a common life is a potent factor in the formation of character It is the atmosphere in which the day is passed that matters so much

The Taittiriya Upanishad devotes the first chapter to education It lays stress on the need of self study (independent reading) and discourse, and joining to them a certain mode of life and conduct The following passage on the process of education is illuminating —

“Right conduct (*ṛta*) should be joined to studies and discourse Practice of truth (*satya*) should be joined to studies and discourse Austerity (*tapas*) should be joined to studies and discourse Control of senses (*dama*) should be joined to studies and discourse Control of mind (*sama*) should be joined to studies and discourse Prescribed ritual should be joined to studies and discourse Agni hotra should be joined to studies and discourse Hospitality should be joined to studies and discourse Humanity should be

joined to studies and discourse Care of dependents should be joined to studies and discourse Preservation of virile power should be joined to studies and discourse Proper bringing up of children should be joined to studies and discourse (The last injunction is meant for the teacher only) Satyavacas, the son of Rathitar, holds that Truth is the fundamental rule of conduct, Taponitva, son of Puruṣīsti, holds that Austerity is fundamental, whereas Naka, son of Mudgalya, assigns this position to instruction, *i.e.*, to studies and discourse These two, says he, verily are austerity, these are austerity"—(I 9)

The educational process aims at a definite objective The objective is indicated in the parting exhortation of the teacher to the student It runs as follows —

“ Speak the Truth

Do the Right

Neglect not your studies

Having completed your studies here (*lit* having made an acceptable gift to the teacher), found a family as a house holder

Be not negligent of Truth, Virtue, personal welfare and prosperity Neglect not studies and discourse (acquisition and dissemination of knowledge) ”

“ Let your mother be an object of adoration to you.

Let your father be an object of adoration to you.

Let your teacher be an object of adoration to you.

Let an *atithi* (an unexpected, even unknown, guest) be an object of adoration to you.

Whatever deeds are unblamable may be performed ; no other deeds are to be performed.

In the behaviour of your teachers, too, whatever is commendable should be followed ; nothing else in their behaviour is to be followed.

Proper courtesy and regard are to be shown to learned Brahmins ”

“ Give in charity—with faith (in the worthiness of the cause).

Give in charity—even if this faith be lacking.

In giving charity, give with an open hand

Give your mite, if you cannot give much.

Give even from fear (under pressure).

Give, if you have once given your word.”

“ If you have any doubt in regard to an action or to conduct, follow the practice of Brahmins who are able to judge, are devoted, amiable and lovers of virtue . do as they would do in a similar situation. As regards behaviour towards undesir-

able persons, follow likewise the practice of the Brahmins, possessing the above qualifications. behave as they would to such persons " (I 13)

The rules of conduct to be observed by the student and the parting exhortation of the teacher are expressed in very simple language and there is hardly any need of comments for purposes of elucidation. At the end of the rules of conduct to be observed during the period of formal instruction, attention is specifically drawn to three rules, which, according to three teachers, are severally fundamental. Satyavacas naturally, assigns the pride of place to Truth, Taponitya, no less naturally, to Austerity (*tapas*), while Nāka assigns it to the pursuit of culture in the narrow sense of the word. The parting exhortation emphasizes the following points

(i) Leaving the school or college means the termination of the period of formal instruction under a teacher, it does not mean cessation of the process of education. That process is a lifelong business for the individual. We can never afford to cease to be students. The principles of conduct, if not the rules of action, which have guided the student in his student days should continue to guide him. He is to remain vigilant in doing the Right and the pursuit and practice

of Truth ; he is to promote his well-being and prosperity.

(ii) He is to be permeated by the spirit of Reverence. The objects of this reverence are his parents, his teachers, men of light and learning and the *atithi*, the unexpected, unknown stranger-guest. Reverence to parents and teachers is a universally recognised obligation, but what is the point in calling for similar reverence to an unknown visitor who approaches us for the satisfaction of a primary need of life? The *atithi* has no claim upon us on the ground of kinship or friendship. When we help him out of his immediate difficulty, we generally do it as an act of grace. This may produce spiritual pride in us, and, if the act is done without grace, it may lower him even in his own estimation. The act of charity, in such a case, *unblesses* "him who gives and him who takes." On this ground, there is a volume of feeling against charity given by an individual to an individual. The proper attitude is to look upon the *atithi* as a representative of humanity—nothing more or less. He has no special claims upon us ; his sole claim is that of being a fellow human being. And this, if one could but rise to the requisite height, is the supreme claim that can be made on the individual.

Such reverence is the essence of what Auguste Comte called the Religion of Humanity. If we cannot rise to such a height, the best thing is to render help to needy people through organised channels.

(iii) As regards charity, the highest motive, of course, is the sense that one is helping a good cause—such charity, like mercy, is doubly blessed, “it blesseth him who gives, and him who takes.” Even where this sense is lacking, charity is commended. Even when it is given under pressure, the net result, according to the Upanishad, is a positive value. As regards the amount of the charity, the exhortation amounts to this—“Do your best.”

(iv) Difficult cases, which are bound to arise now and then, are not forgotten. When our private light fails us, the best we can do is to follow the *practice* of some one whom we regard as wiser and better than ourselves. His *practice*, not his *advice*. Many well qualified persons are reluctant to tender advice. “When a man” says Goethe, “comes to me for some advice, I tell him that I would gladly give the advice, provided he solemnly promised *not* to follow it.” Goethe seems to have thought that most people who approach you for advice really want you to second

what they have already resolved to do. Again, the man whom you approach for advice may not have the strength to be quite frank. The best thing would be to follow his *practice* in a similar situation. *That* would be a reliable expression of his real opinion on the point

CHAPTER IX

THE STRUCTURE & GRADES OF REALITY

“ Our sense-organs are apertures made in our head, opening outwards. In consequence, men normally look *out*. Now and then, some men look *within* ” In this concise statement, the Upanishad contrasts outer observation which is so common, to the inner observation which is so uncommon. What do we get by these two kinds of observation? What do we find when we look *out* and look *within*? In other words, what is the character of the reality as experienced by us?

First, as to the results of outer observation. Perhaps the most striking feature of what we see around and about us is the multitudinousness of things. They are not all repetitions, one of the other, but different from one another. Along with multiplicity, there goes endless variety. Each thing seems to have a distinct character of its own, and yet it is not wholly different from other things. Each is the ground of an indefinite number of qualities, some of which are found in other things as well. Besides, it is found somewhere, occupies a certain position, fills a certain

amount of space, i e , has a certain magnitude Each of the many, very many, things that we see around us exhibits the two features of quality and quantity

The multitudinousness of things is not mere multitudinousness Some of them are *related* to each other As we observe more and better, we find that the same object is related to a large number of objects, and in *diverse* ways Our imagination pictures each object united with all other objects in a network of relations What was mere multiplicity in the beginning now appears as a unity—a synthetic unity All the objects are found in one Space, placed alongside each other They form parts of one whole They all form the object of observation or contemplation to the same subject The world outside exhibits a curious combination of unity and multiplicity Which of these aspects is more fundamental—unity or many ness ? Who can say ?

Another striking feature of the world outside is change The sun rises, moves across the sky and sets And it repeats this day after day The water of the stream is in perpetual motion The pond is filled by rain and then dries up The corn ripens, drops and rises again, and we ourselves, as Nacıketas says, do likewise Even

the "ever lasting hills" do change All change takes place in Time All events, occurrences, happen in Time All *there is* in the world outside is in Space, all that happens in it happens in Time Space and Time seem to envelop us all around What are they?

The nature of Space and Time has exercised the minds of philosophers for ages The problem is almost as old as philosophy itself What are they, *as experienced* by us? All parts of Space are found together, lying alongside each other, no two moments of Time are found together Juxtaposition of parts is the essence of Space, succession is the essence of Time Space is found to be in three dimension —as lines, planes or volumes, Time in one dimension only Time seems to flow in a line This is a convenient way of picturing duration, but is not a satisfactory account of the nature of Time Our actual experience is in the present In our ordinary language, the present has a certain extension However, if we reflect a little, we find that almost the whole of what we call the present is really the recent past Strictly speaking, the present is only a point where the past and the future are conjoined or are severed As a point, it has no magnitude It is not interposed between the past and the

future as a block, howsoever small, of the same texture. And where is the past? It is dead and gone. And where is the future? It has not yet come into existence—it is so far only a possibility and not an actuality. We seem to be reduced to a strange predicament. All our thoughts and deeds, even ourselves, seem to exist in Time; and of the three parts of this Time, the past no longer exists, the future has not come into existence, and the present is only the meeting point of these two non existents.

If we turn from the world outside and look within ourselves, we find a bewildering variety of occurrences and all in ceaseless change. But underlying this multiplicity, there is a unity. The states of consciousness are not unrelated entities: they belong together and form parts of a personal life. I am aware of the states that form parts of *my* personal life. I do not know, in this direct manner, the existence of any other states, but I believe with a firm conviction that there are other states which belong to other personal lives. The totality of psychic states are assumed by me to be strung in an indefinite number of distinct units—each owned by a distinct Self or Ego. Here we find an interesting difference between

the outer and the inner world. All the objects in the outer world are parts of one and the same spatial world—they are *here and there, thus and that*, but are parts of one whole. The psychic states, on the other hand, seem to be owned by a number of distinct selves. Are these selves too parts of a larger self? It is a difficult question. Psychology, the study of experience, is inclined in favour of irreducible pluralism of selves. Some poets (*e.g.* Wordsworth) hold that interpenetration of selves is a fundamental feature of the nature of these selves.

When we look at the world as a whole—outer as well as inner, we notice another remarkable feature—that of Gradation or Order. All that exists is not homogeneous. In speaking of outer and inner we have already referred to this difference of gradation. It deserves further consideration. The task is beset with a peculiar difficulty. The observer cannot leave the world, take a stand outside it, and view it as an external observer. He is *in* the world and is bound to remain in it. And from inside, he can observe only from the point where he is. He can have only a fragmentary view of the World—from his particular standpoint. This limitation has a redeeming feature. The observer is not in the

World as a book is in a shelf. He is a part of the whole. The whole or the All reflects itself in him and he mirrors the All. If one could thoroughly understand the nature of a part, he could understand the nature of the whole, for the very nature of the whole implies that each part implies the others and mirrors the whole. In understanding the All, we understand ourselves, in understanding ourselves, we understand the All. The limitation under which the observer labours can be remedied in some degree, inasmuch as his view can be supplemented by the views of other observers, taken from *their* respective standpoints.

The question of grades in the All is the main topic in the second and the third chapter of the Taittiriya Upanishad. The third chapter, Bhrigu Valli, states the position thus — “Bhrigu, the son of Varuna, approached his father and asked him to explain the nature of *Brahman* or the All. Varuna told him to exert, to reflect. Bhrigu reflected (performed austerity) and came to the conclusion that the All is *annam* (food, matter). He felt, however, that this was not the final truth about the nature of the All. He approached his father again and asked him to teach him about the nature of

the All "Exert and reflect," said Varuna again Bhrigu reflected and came to the conclusion that the All is Life (*Prana*) Again he felt dissatisfied and approached his father for further light The father again told him "Desire to know the All by exertion and reflection" Bhrigu reflected and came to the conclusion that the All is Consciousness (*manas*), Again he felt dissatisfied and approached his father for further light The father repeated his previous exhortation Bhrigu reflected and came to the conclusion that the All is Thought or Intelligence (*Vijnan*) Even this proved unsatisfying and he approached his father again for further light The father said again "Exert and reflect thus desire to know the nature of the All ' Bhrigu reflected and came to the conclusion that the All is Bliss (*anand*)"

At each stage, "the essence of the All is conceived to be the source of all that exists, the sustainer of all that exists and the final retreat of all that exists" This position is, in turn, assigned to Matter, Life, Consciousness, Thought and Bliss The Brahmanand Valli (chapter II) makes a very significant statement about these phases of Reality 'In each pair, the preceding phase is the Body, and the succeeding phase the Soul that enters it' The phases are not all of the same

kind or status the later phase is, *as it were*, the *atman* of the preceding phase. It does not annul or supersede the preceding phase, but infuses, enriches and exalts it. Thus Life is the soul of Matter, fills it, Mind (Consciousness) is the soul of Life, fills it, Thought is the soul of Consciousness, fills it, and Bliss is the soul of Thought and perfects it. The five phases or grades of Reality may be regarded as five *Sheaths*, encasing one another. What we have designated the Grades of Reality are commonly referred to as the *Sheaths of Brahmar*.

Now a few words on the nature of each of the five Grades or Orders of Reality

(a) *Matter*

The first impression we get about the world or the All is that it is matter. We are surrounded on all sides by material things. Our own body is such a thing. Science knows nothing about the creation of matter, it knows not whence matter came originally. It starts with matter and tells us about the transformations it has gone through and the forms in which it appears today. The generally accepted view is that originally it was in the form of igneous gas, in course of time, it became liquid—molten mass, and finally the outer portion solidified into a crust. We find it in these three forms now—a solid has a relatively stable shape

and volume and a fixed mass, a liquid assumes the shape of the vessel into which it is put—its parts easily turn round each other, but in these changes, its volume and mass remain unchanged. In the case of a gas, the mass remains unaltered, but the shape and the volume are variable. Modern physics has radically changed our conceptions of matter. We do not know whether the material world has any bounds. We are able to recognise the existence of stars whose light would have to travel millions of light years, before it reaches our earth. At the other end, what is the limit? Till recently, scientists spoke of the indivisible atom, but we are being told now that even the atom may be a little universe.

Physical science tells us a lot about matter, but only about matter as such. Some scientists go beyond the position taken up by physics and look upon matter as the ground of all there is in the world. Thomas Huxley said that matter had in it "the promise and potency" of all that exists on the face of the earth and elsewhere. Herbert Spencer held that life arises out of matter, and, later, mind or consciousness arises out of life. This is symbolised by a representation on each volume of his *Synthetic Philosophy*—a butterfly sitting on a tree, which arises out of a rock. This is the position

taken up by materialism. This is the first fruit of reflection, as in the case of Bhrigu, but it is not a position in which reflection can rest. The Bhrigu in each one of us gets dissatisfied and seeks further light.

What is the cause of the dissatisfaction?

All that can happen to matter is a change in the position of atoms. This change appears as simple motion, it appears as heat, it appears as magnetism, it appears as electricity. But can it appear as life and as consciousness? As a modern Bhrigu has pointed out, even if materialism *is* true, it is impossible to know that it is true. All consciousness, according to materialism, is a consequence or a concomitant of certain changes in the brain. Now the materialist affirms that materialism is true: this judgment of his is a consequence of certain changes in *his* brain. I affirm that materialism is false. This judgment is the consequence of certain changes in *my* brain. The two sets of changes in the two brains are two distinct facts, the two judgments—made by the materialist and by me—are two additional facts, of a different order. We can take note of these four facts, but that is all. The question of the truth or falsehood of the judgments does not arise, and if it does arise, it cannot be solved on the data available.

In order that we may solve it, we require some criterion whereby we could distinguish between truth and untruth. Materialism gives us only brute facts, it cannot give us a criterion.

We cannot rest satisfied with matter as the essence of the All. We must pass beyond it.

(b) *Life*

Life is not to be considered as a thing, like matter. It is, as the Upanishad puts it, an infusion, the soul, as it were, of matter. Life does not appear apart from matter, it appears *in* matter. Living matter is not matter and life, it is matter in a certain grade, form or phase.

On our earth, life appears in two forms—Plant life and Animal life—the former being more fundamental, not only on account of temporal priority in respect of emergence, but also because plants prepare the food that sustains the animals. In both forms, life assumes myriads of guises. The Biologist maintains that about 25 lakh species of plants are known today. The higher animals fall under two classes, invertebrates and vertebrates. About one million species of the former are known and the Biologist hopes that about twice as many more may yet be discovered. The vertebrates are rare, but even of them, about 60 000 species are known.

What are the main features of life? In what does organic matter differ from inorganic matter?

Methodologically, it would be better to confine ourselves to plant life as the simpler phase, but some reference to animal life may be unavoidable

In a brief section, the Brihadâraṇyaka Upaniṣad states the main characteristics of life as follows —

“Growth

Verily, Life is Growth (*ukṛta*) All growth is on account of life From him who knows this springs up a son who too knows that life is growth Whoever thus knows obtains union and oneness with Growth

Integration or Organization (*yajus*)

Verily, Life is Integration, for in Life are all these beings joined With him who knows this are all beings united for his supremacy Whoever thus knows obtains union and oneness with Integration

Assimilation (*saman*)

Life is Assimilation The living thing assimilates all to its own nature All beings become unified for the glory of one who knows this He himself, so to say, becomes assimilation itself

Power, capacity of self maintenance (*śatatra*)

Life is Power, for it secures the continuance of the Body against damage or hurt He who

knows this can maintain himself with his own effort. He becomes might and dominion " (v 13)

This brief statement of the main characteristics of Life needs some elucidation.

Growth Life is essentially a process of growth. An organism starts as a single cell. This divides itself into two cells, and each of these two further sub-divides itself into two cells. The process continues with incredible rapidity. According to modern Biology, there are upwards of a hundred thousand billions of cells in the body of a man. The cells continue to live together as a huge colony. When the division assumes the form of *separation*, the parent becomes the child. Reproduction is only a form of growth, the offspring being only a branch or elongation of the parent.

Integration or Organization The cells that form an organism are not mere repetitions of one another. The organism shows a differentiation of structure and function in its parts. Along with this differentiation goes an integration of functions. All parts, in a normal condition, work for a common purpose—the welfare of the whole. The roots of the tree draw nourishment from the ground, the leaves draw it from the atmosphere, and the stem serves as a medium of

communication and conduction between the roots and the leaves 'Among higher animals, we find a number of 'compensatory mechanisms' When a part of an organ is removed, in some cases it is regenerated When this does not happen, the remaining part makes up the deficiency by increased activity Sometimes the other organs take up the function of the organ that is lost

Assimilation Growth depends upon assimilation The living organism takes in food, destroys its character as foreign matter and converts it into a part of itself All that is taken in cannot be so transformed The useless part is thrown out Excretion goes along with assimilation The green plants are the chief agents of food production They do it with the help of the light of the sun, drawing upon the vast resources available on the land, in water and in the atmosphere The plants produce food not only for themselves, but also for the animals

Capacity of self maintenance Life is produced on a prodigious scale The potentialities, in this regard, are far in excess of the actual production The common house fly, we are told, may, under favourable conditions, lay as many as six batches of eggs of about one hundred and forty eggs each, during its short life of three

weeks. If all the progeny survived and multiplied at the same rate, how many flies would be produced in a single year ? For the prodigious number of living things that are born, there is neither food nor space available. In consequence, some must disappear in the interests of others. This gives rise to a very ruthless 'struggle for existence.' At the lower level, almost "every mouth is a slaughter house and every stomach is a grave." Nature 'so careful of the type,' is 'so careless of the individual life.' At the human level, the struggle assumes new forms, but remains as ruthless as at the lower level. Does it not become even more ruthless and terrible ? Ask the victims of tyranny and exploitation.

(c) *Consciousness or Mind*

We have anticipated and been already in the third order of Reality—in the region of Consciousness. Consciousness, says the Upanishad, is an infusion into Life ; the inner soul, as it were, of life. What is this new grade or phase of Reality ? How does the Animal differ from the Plant ?

The animal grows, acts as a whole, assimilates and makes an effort to maintain its existence; even so does the plant. But whereas the animal knows of its interactions with the environment, the plant seems to know nothing of the environment or of its

interactions with the environment. The plant may be conscious for aught we know; but if it is conscious, its consciousness is either of a very low degree of intensity, or entirely of a non-communicative character, so far as we are concerned. In order that the animal may effectively interact with the environment, it must have the means of knowing the environment and acting on it suitably. These means it has—its organs of sense and of action. By the sense organs it gets to know the character of the world around it; its organs of action function as its tools in the interests of self-maintenance. There are exceptions on either side, but generally the plant is bound to a particular habitat, whereas the animal is free to move about. This capacity of free movement indefinitely extends the habitat of the animal.

(d) *Thought or Intelligence*

In passing from rudimentary or animal consciousness to Thought or Intelligence, we pass to a new grade or phase of Reality. Thought is a form of consciousness and man is a brute, but the difference between man and brute, even if one of degree only, is so great that we may, for all practical purposes, regard it as one of kind. How does Thought or Intelligence differ from rudimentary consciousness?

The animal perceives objects. It can also recognise them. This shows that it can have images. However, the range of its imagining seems to be very restricted. Its imagination is *reproductive*. Man's imagination has a wider range. It does not only reproduce the past, it also produces novel combinations. I can imagine a creature with the head of a horse, the trunk of a monkey and the legs of a donkey. It is not possible for the horse, the monkey or the donkey to imagine such a creature. They have never seen such a creature and are not able to *analyse* the wholes, to *abstract* the three parts out of the wholes in which they appear, and then to *synthesise* them into a new whole. Such *analysis* and *synthesis* (*vikalpa* and *sankalpa*) is the special function of human thought. The animal sees individual objects and can deal with them, it can also have images of individual objects. Man goes much beyond this. He can form ideas or concepts. The animal knows horses and men, but knows nothing of 'horse' and 'man'. He has seen two men, two horses, two bundles of hay, but with all this, he cannot understand what 'two' means.

It is sometimes said that the animal is guided by instinct, while man is guided by intelligence. This is wrong, if it means that man has no instincts.

or that his instincts do not influence his behaviour, and that the animal consciousness is utterly devoid of intelligence. The late Henry Bergson has advanced an interesting theory of the relation of instinct and intelligence, as we find them today. Conscious life, he says, moved a certain distance on a single path. Then it was instinct and intelligence mixed up. In course of time, it arrived at a point where the common path bifurcated into two paths. The consciousness of those who moved on one path developed on the side of instinct, retaining the original element of intelligence, those who moved on the other path developed on the side of intelligence, retaining the original instinctive element. To-day, the ant and the bee stand at the end of the first path, and man at the end of the other.

(c) *Bliss*

The highest grade or order in Reality is referred to as Bliss (*anand*). The Upanishads say that the state of dreamless sleep, when the self, completely withdrawn from the world and its distractions, is all with itself, is a state of Bliss. If it is so, the humblest man passes about a fourth of his life in a state of Bliss. Sometimes they speak of the blissful state as a fourth state, when the self is in communion with the Supreme Soul and the communion is so

intimate that it is, in experience, indistinguishable from union. To secure such communion is the supreme aim of the Yogic discipline.

In our daily waking life, do we experience bliss? Yes, though in rare moments—when we lose ourselves in disinterested, pure love, or devotion to a noble cause. Devotion to the True, to the Good, to the Beautiful admits a man to the abode of bliss, though for short intervals. The mother and the wife know it, even the father and the husband know it, the Scholar knows it, the Artist knows it and the Patriot knows it too.

“On Earth, there is nothing so great as man. is man, there is nothing so great as mind.” This was said many years ago. we can add that in the human mind, there is nothing so great as the experience of Bliss. Then does man come nearest God, who is all-Bliss.

CHAPTER X

THE IDEA OF GOD

Philosophy is mainly concerned with considering the nature and mutual relations of the World, Man and God. Probably due to a peculiarity in the constitution of the human mind, the relations between these three entities are generally considered in pairs. In the West, the ancient Greeks were busy mainly considering the relation between God and the World, the mediaeval philosophers, the relation between God and Man, while the main question with modern thinkers has been the relation between Man and the World. The philosophers have been considering the problem of knowledge, and the scientists and technologists applying human knowledge to the conquest of the material world. In our country, we are not able to see a similar sequence, but, here too, the nature and mutual relations of the three entities have been the main problems for philosophy.

In the present chapter, we shall consider the idea of God and how God is related to man and the World.

How does the idea of God arise in the mind of man ?

There are some who trace it to the emotion of fear, others trace it to the sentiment of reverence. Both fear and reverence are connected with man's limitations. Man finds himself limited in space and in time. He is here and not there, he is born, lives for a time and then disappears. He notices the same limitation in case of the objects around him. They too are mere fragments in a vast whole, and are subject to change. He is also limited in knowledge. And whatever little knowledge he possesses seems to be limited to relations. Philosophy is born of wonder. The brute is an object in the midst of objects, he changes from one condition to another, but it is doubtful whether he does or can attend to these facts and wonder at them. Man notices these facts and wonders at them. 'I am limited,' says he, 'limited in space and time and in knowledge. Is limitation or finitude the ultimate, final fact about existence, or is there something not subject to these limitations? Is there any being not here or there, but everywhere, not now or then, but always, a being who knows not this or that, but all there is? Is there any omnipresent, eternal, omniscient being? If so, what can I know of Him? How

is He related to me and to the contingent world ?

This is the question with which the Śvetāśvata Upaniṣhad opens —

“ Thus the discourses on *Brahman* —

‘ What is the ultimate ground (of all this) ? Whence are we born ? Whereby do we live ? And on what are we grounded ? Governed by whom, do we live in various conditions, experiencing Pleasure and Pain ? Instruct us, ye knowers of *Brahman* ” (I 1) —

These questions are forthwith answered thus

“ Time (*kāla*), Inherent nature (*śābha*), Necessity (*nyāsa*), Chance (*Yadṛcchā*), Elements (*bhūta*), Primordial stuff (*Yoni*) and the Self (*puruṣa*) are to be considered (as possible explanations)

(Neither the material factors stated) nor a combination thereof (can be accepted as the cause, for) the Soul (*Ātman*) remains (unexplained)

The Soul is impotent in regard to the causation of Pleasure and Pain, (and so cannot be the ultimate cause)

The sages devoted to meditation (*dhyāna*) and concentration (*yoga*) have beheld the power of God, concealed in His own qualities (as the ultimate ground)

He is the one that superintends all the causes—from Time to the Self (as enumerated above)."

The answer given is succinct, but, as the reader will observe, it is quite definite. It amounts to this,—

As regards the *stuff* of which the world is made, it is possible to hold the following views:—

(i) That it sprang out of Nothing,

(ii) That it is the product of a number of Elements,

(iii) That it is the product of primordial *Prakṛti*.

This stuff has been undergoing changes. What is the ground of these changes? What are the conditions that have determined the course of evolution?

The following determinants have been mentioned:—

(i) Law, imposed from without,

(ii) Inherent nature of *Prakṛti*,

(iii) Time (Emergent evolution? or a succession of accidents?)

None of these offers a satisfactory explanation, as the Self remains unexplained.

Is this Self then the cause? How can the Self be the cause and the ground, when it is impotent in determining the conditions of its own pleasure and pain?

The ultimate ground is neither matter, nor the finite spirit. It is *Brahman*, the Infinite Spirit.

Here we have a definite denial of Materialism and Subjective Idealism.

Against Materialism, it is urged that whatever else may be within the potency of matter, consciousness cannot be included in it. All change in matter is ultimately rearrangement of its particles, all that happens to it is redistribution of energy. Consciousness is something utterly different from this and cannot be assimilated to motion. Psychology is intimately related to Physiology, but cannot be regarded as a branch of it, nor, further back, a branch of Physics.

Subjective Idealism, the view that the finite spirit is the ground of the so called physical world, is summarily dismissed on the ground of the impotence of this spirit. We can, however, examine subjective idealism on other grounds as well. Subjective idealism maintains that the world of matter has no existence outside the self. It is made up of the images of the finite self. Subjective idealism, as commonly understood, is pluralistic. It believes in the existence of a number of spirits. Each of these spirits has a world of its own—the world of its ideas. Besides these private worlds, is there any public world? There seems to be

one soul. It is on the basis of such a world that there can be an intercourse between the finite spirits. I convey my ideas to my neighbour by means of my body, he receives them by the help of his body. I perceive my body as well as his, and he too sees both these bodies. We both see the same sun, the same moon, the same stream, the same hills. How does that happen? If there are only private worlds of individual spirits and no common or public world, how does it happen that the private worlds are so like each other in their contents?

It may be suggested that the agreement between the private worlds is a chance coincidence. That all men should see the same world, and, since the beginning of recorded history, should have been seeing the same world, even though, in fact, there is no objective world, is not an utter impossibility; but the possibility of this being the case is almost zero. Bishop Berkeley held that all the private worlds are caused by the operation of God on individual souls. The private worlds are similar, because the self same God, who is their cause, chooses to affect all the souls in the same manner. It will be observed that, according to this view, the ultimate ground of the world is God and not the finite spirit.

The Upanishad accepts the existence of the world and of the finite spirits, credits them with a certain kind of causal power, but declares that God superintends all the causes from Time on to the Self

Now as to the nature of God

The attributes of God can be considered under three heads—Metaphysical attributes, Cosmological attributes and Ethical attributes

(1) *Metaphysical attributes of God*

(i) God is free from the limitations of finitude.

He is free from the limitations under which finite spirits and objects appear. He is not limited by Space or Time. He is omnipresent and eternal. He is omnipotent. The word 'omnipotent' literally means 'having power over all,' not 'having the power to do anything imaginable'. The latter interpretation, which is adopted by many, leads to absurd positions. Can God create another God greater than Himself? Can He abolish Himself? Can He act in an ungodly manner and thus contradict His own nature? Obviously, there is no sense in construing omnipotence to mean such unlimited power.

(ii) God is one

As God is Infinite, He is the only Infinite.

There is no room for two or more Gods. If we are theists, we have to be monotheists.

(iii) God is a Spirit among spirits

The Upanishad believes in a personal God. What is meant by a person? The most essential feature of personality is self-consciousness. Another character is relation to other persons. This character being an essential feature of personality, a personal God needs other spirits besides Himself. And as God is eternal, so must these other spirits be. Otherwise, we are constrained to admit that God became a Person at a particular moment. The Christians believe that God is Love. Has He always been Love or did He become Love at some time in the remote past? If Love is an essential part of His nature, the objects of His Love—finite spirits—must have co-existed with Him from all eternity.

(2) *Cosmological attributes of God*

God is immanent and transcendent.

He permeates the entire world. "He is nearer than what is the nearest and farther than what is the farthest." All nature throbs with the energy that is derived from Him.

"Higher than the world is *Brahman*. He is the Supreme, the Great, concealed in all things.

He embraces the whole universe, and is the Ruler or Lord” (III 7)

“His hands and feet are everywhere, everywhere His eyes and face, and everywhere His ears. He encompasses all there is” (III 16)

“As the sun illumines all quarters—above, across and below, even so does God, the holy, the adorable, the One, rule over the whole world” (V 4)

God rules over the world, in accordance with a Law that He Himself has ordained. He does not rule over it in a lawless, capricious manner. The *uniformity of Law is the cardinal principle* accepted by science. It is on the basis of such uniformity that an understanding of Nature is possible. Faith in Miracles—temporary suspension of Natural Law is becoming a thing of the past. Occasionally we come across an apology for this faith but the apology is weak and unconvincing.

(3) *Ethical attributes of God*

Often we refer to God as good. It is better to refer to Him as holy. Goodness as we understand it, is triumph over evil, *after a struggle*. And the struggle is *internal*, the higher self fighting against the lower. In case of God, there can be no such struggle. He does not *attain* holiness, He *is* holy.

In regard to God's relation to man, a formidable difficulty is presented by the existence of Evil. Why does God permit Evil to exist? Evil is found in a variety of forms—as pain, as ignorance, as vice. The most embarrassing form is that of vice or moral evil. Vice is a consequence of human freedom. Without this freedom, there would be no vice, but no virtue either. Freedom is the essence of a Spirit. The demand that a good God should not have permitted Evil in the world really amounts to saying that a piece of dead matter or a will less brute is better than a free spirit. This is a matter of opinion.

Man is a free agent. He can do good or do evil. God rules over the world as well as over men. He deals with men according to the Moral Law that is as universal as the Natural Law. True, the Moral Law is sometimes transgressed, but the transgression is annulled by punishment, swift or slow. Just as Christianity and Islam countenance a belief in the occasional suspension of Natural Law, so do they countenance a belief in the suspension of the Moral Law. The strict requirement of the Moral Law is that the agent must reap the reward of his action. According to Islam, exemption from the operation of this Law can be secured by faith in the pro-

CHAPTER VI

UDDĀLAKA TO HIS SON, ŚVETKETU

Uddālaka and his son, Śvetketu, figure fairly prominently in the Upanishads. The doctrine taught in the Upanishads is to be communicated to a deserving pupil or a son. The sixth chapter of the Chhandogya Upanishad is taken up with the instruction imparted by Uddālaka to his son.

“In the beginning, my dear,” said Uddālaka, “there was just Being (*sat*), one only, without a second. There are some who say that this “one alone, without a second” was non Being (*asat*). But how could this be? How could Being be produced from non Being? No, my dear, in the beginning, that which is (*sat*), was, one only, without a second.”

“It reflected ‘I shall multiply and grow forth.’ It produced Fire (Heat, *tejas*). Fire willed to multiply and produced Water. Water willed to multiply and produced Food (*annam*). Whenever it rains, food is produced. From water alone is food produced.”

“That Being (the producer of Fire, Water and Food) reflected ‘Let me enter these three

with this living soul (*Jiva atma*), and then reveal Names and Forms (individual creatures) Let me make these three (Fire, Water and Food) each tripartite in nature ' He did enter them with the *jiva atma*, revealed Names and Forms (produced individual objects and made them tripartite in nature "

" These three, when they reach man (form part of the body of a man), become threefold —food, when eaten, is divided into three parts the gross portion becomes excrement, the intermediate one, flesh, and the finest part, mind Water, when drunk, is divided into three parts the gross portion becomes urine, the intermediate one blood, and the finest part, respiration (*prana*) Heat (heat producing substances—the fuel of the body), when taken in, is divided into three parts The gross portion becomes bone, the intermediate one, the marrow, and the finest part, speech Mind, my son, arises from food, Breath from water, and Speech from Hear "

" This Body, my son, is a sprout that springs from a root This root (cause) is food Food itself is a sprout and springs from Water Water itself is a sprout and springs from Fire, and Fire, as a sprout, springs from the original Being (*sat*) All these objects, my dear, have their origin in

the original Being, their abode in that Being, and also their rest in It ”

“ All these objects in the Universe have their origin in the *Sat*, they are sustained by the *Sat* and finally rest in the *Sat*. How each of these three becomes threefold in Man, has already been described. When a man departs this life, his Speech merges into the Mind, the Mind merges into *prana* (respiration), *prana* into Heat, and Heat into the supreme Deity. All the Universe has its being in the supreme Deity. That Deity is *Sat* (Real), that is *Ātman* (spirit). And thou, Śvetketu, art that (Spirit) ”

Having declared the unity of origin and final destiny of all creatures, Uddālaka illustrates it in a series of images. Just as when honey has been gathered by the bees, it is not possible to say whence a particular part of it was drawn, so all creatures, when ultimately mingled with the All, lose their identity. The creatures—tiger, lion, wolf, bear, worm, insect, gnat or mosquito—rise again and again. The ultimate ground and rising place of all is the supreme Deity. “ That is *Sat*, that is *Ātman*, and thou, Śvetketu, art that (Spirit) ”

Just as various streams, rising from the sea, go back to the sea and lose their individuality, even so do these creatures go round a cycle

Just as salt, mingled with water, makes the whole water saltish, and gives to every part of water the taste of salt, even so does the Universal Spirit permeate all that exists

“ If Life leaves a branch of the tree, the branch withers , if Life leaves another branch, that too withers , and so a third If Life leaves the whole tree, the whole tree withers In the same manner, when the Self leaves the body, the body withers and dies , but the Self dies not The essence of all is the Self , it is *Sat* (Real), it is *Ātman* (spirit) And thou, Śvetketu, art that (Spirit) ”

Uddalaka's discourse deals with the following points —

- (i) The birth of the World,
- (ii) The constitution and functioning of human body,
- (iii) The unity of origin and destiny of all creatures

Each of these points deserves some consideration

(i) The birth of the World

About the birth of the World or the unfolding of the cosmic drama, obviously neither Uddalaka nor any one else can give us his personal observation of facts We are here in the realm of speculation Modern science has said

a lot on the subject, but that also is mainly speculation. We shall here briefly indicate the position of modern science and then consider Uddālaka's views in the light of that position.

For Physics, the world is what can be studied by Physics—the object of actual or possible observation. On the basis of observation of individual facts, Physics enunciates certain Laws. The best-known and probably the most fundamental of these Laws is the Law of Gravitation. According to this Law, every particle of matter attracts every other particle. Physics begins with matter; it does not undertake to tell us about the origin of matter. When two atoms (or whatever other name you give to the smallest parts) come into contact and coalesce with each other, they produce a larger mass and also generate some heat. The larger masses also coalesce with each other. This process continues. After the lapse of considerable time, huge and hot masses or conglomerates of particles appear. These are burning masses. Physical science also tells us that all parts of matter are in incessant motion : they are whirling round. As a result of this motion, fragments are torn off the parent mass, and, under the force of gravitation, begin to whirl round the parent mass. Our earth is assumed to be such

a fragment. It is supposed that long, long ago, it was torn off the Sun under the gravitational pull of a giant star that happened, in the course of its wanderings in empty space, to come close enough to the Sun. Such fragments radiate heat as do the parent masses. The fragments, being small, cool down and from a gaseous form pass to a liquid form. In due course, the surface becomes a solid crust. The Sun is still, a great part of it, a ball of burning gas, the crust of the Earth is solid, but the interior is molten mass, the moon has cooled down to a point which makes it impossible for any life of the type with which we are familiar on the Earth, to maintain itself on it. According to modern science, "the earth, like other planets, was born of fire, and had to condense, possibly from a gas to a liquid, and then cool from a liquid to a solid—or rather a body with a solid exterior—before it could become a fit home for life."

How did life arise?

The prevailing view among biologists is that life comes from life. This is known as the theory of Biogenesis. Just as the physicist starts with matter, so the biologist starts with life. He too does not presume to answer the question of origins. He merely attempts to give an account

of development or evolution of life. "Life probably manifested itself as a water plant, and it must have been many millions of years before this simple structure became at all complex in character. From it evolved more complicated forms, more luxurious water plants, and life endowed with the faculty of motion. The forms were still of the type which had to live in water to continue their existence, and more millions of years passed before the raising of the land surface and its consequent drying up forced plant life to accustom itself to the strange new conditions."

The above quotation is taken from "Everybody's Book of Facts" (p. 29). It is obvious, however, that we have here not *observed facts*, but a theory favoured at the present time by scientists. Do we find any similarities between the modern speculations and those of Uddālaka?

Uddālaka summarily dismisses the view that the world came out of Nothing. "How can *sat* (the existent) come out of *asat* (the non-existent)?" The World has a ground, 'one only, without a second'. The ground is declared to be a spirit. The spirit willed to multiply. The world that resulted from this willing passed through three stages: First, Water, and Earth, and matter,

including organized matter) This is very much like saying that "the earth was born of fire and had to condense possibly from a gas to a liquid, and then cool from a liquid to a solid" He adds that "each of these three became tripartite in nature" This seems to mean that the three forms—burning gas, molten matter and solid matter—remained mixed up what was gaseous, was mainly gaseous, but included elements that were liquid and solid, and so with liquids and solids The Sun which at the surface is burning gas is not all gas, the earth has a solid exterior, but its interior is molten matter

As regards life, Uddalaka holds that life (food, organic body) has its origin in Water The modern view is that water was originally the exclusive habitat of vegetable life and it continued such for a long, very long time If not the source, it was at any rate the most favourable environment for life to exist and to flourish in

(b) The human body its constitution and functioning

Passing from the birth of a World to the constitution of the human body, we pass from the region of speculation to the region of verifiable fact

The human body is a living organism, and

man a conscious individual. As mere body, man is composed of the three constituents of which other bodies are composed. As an individual, he is a manifestation of Name and Form. As a conscious being, he is a spirit. Uddālaka does not subscribe to the view that consciousness results from matter arriving at a certain stage of organization. He adopts a dualistic view. Having produced Fire, Water and Food (matter, including organized matter, in the three forms), the originating Being (*Sat*) reflected, "Let me enter these three with this living soul (*Jīva atmā*), and then reveal Names and Forms (individual creatures)," and did enter them with the *Jīva ātma*. The *Jīva ātma* itself was not produced. This seems to imply the independent, substantial existence of the finite spirit.

The human body is often likened to a machine. If it is a machine, it is one of a unique kind. Like an ordinary machine, it has a complex structure in which the various parts act in interdependence for a common purpose. However, whereas in the ordinary machine the purpose is determined from without—by the designer of the machine, the purpose, in the case of the human body, is determined from within. The organs of the body, cooperate to further the ends of the body itself.

If a spinning and weaving machine span and wove just *to clothe itself*, it would be functioning like the human body. Again, the human body *grows*. For its functioning, it needs Heat or Energy. This is supplied by the fuel it takes in. For growth and renovation, it needs food that could be used to form the tissues of the body. The food we consume serves both these ends. Carbohydrates and fats are used mainly as fuel, proteins are partly used to build up tissues. We hear so much these days about vitamins. These are necessary neither as fuel, nor as builders of the tissues of the body; their function is to enable the body to make up for the deficiencies in our diet. They may be called *protecting foods*.

Our body is not made up only of solid ingredients. Water constitutes the main ingredient. The human body, as a whole, is 65 per cent water, the Brain, 75 per cent and the Blood, 80 per cent. Of the remaining part, oxygen is the main constituent (65 per cent), carbon, a distant second (18 per cent) and Hydrogen, the third (10 per cent). "The materials of a man's body," says an American biologist, "are worth less than one dollar"! At pre-war rates. How business minded are the Americans!

The most important element for the mainte-

go back to the sea and then lose their individuality, even so do these creatures go round a cycle " It will be noted that in the list of creatures mentioned, Uddalaka does *not* include man Does it mean that the lower animals, considered as psychic beings, arise from a common psychic reservoir and return to it after a limited period of individuation ? On this interpretation, each one of them would, during the period of individual existence, be *so much of mind stuff*, temporarily torn off the parent mass Man, in his view, is endowed with a genuine personality, is an immortal spirit " When the Self leaves the body, the body withers and dies, but the Self dies not " As death approaches, his speech fails a man, but he continues to have consciousness, then consciousness also departs, but he retains for sometime Heat or the temperature of the living body Last of all that too departs and returns to the original source Modern research endorses the view that all the organs do not cease functioning simultaneously, - some continue to function for a little while after the individual has 'died '

men, you must come in some form of contact with them and talk to them. Speech is more potent than Sound or Name, but its power depends largely upon its being an expression of your own mind. Often when we address public gatherings, it is not really we who speak. The tongue used is ours, but the real speaker is some other person. We merely utter his thoughts. The same is often true of our writings. More potent than Speech is the Mind. A common censure on our present system of education is that it does not develop any original thinking. Young men, studying at colleges or the universities, are moulded on a uniform pattern. The system is dominated by examinations. In an examination, the examinee feels diffident in expressing his personal opinion, on any controversial point. He finds it safer to reproduce the opinions expressed by his teacher, or by some one who has been able to publish them in print. This becomes a habit, and, in other matters too, the student shirks independent thinking.

More potent than Mind or thought is the Will or the power of deciding. The tragedy of some lives just consists in this: they can think well, but the process of thought, in their case, is intermixture. They think and think, but are not able

clear *Discernment* (*vijnāna*) is the end of the process of deliberation. Sanatkumār declares that *Citta* (imaginative assembling of all relevant alternatives) is higher than *saṅkalpa* (will); *Dhyāna* (Reflection) is higher than *Citta*; and *Vijnāna* (final discernment) is higher than *Dhyāna*.

Between the *making* of a Resolution and the *execution* of it, there is an interval, often a fairly long interval. Sometimes the resolution is never executed: mere lapse of time weakens such a resolution. If I decide to take a daily evening walk *from today*, the probability is that I shall start doing so and form a habit. If I decide to start it from the next Monday, or from the first day of the next month, the chances are that I shall not start it. When the next Monday or the first of the next month arrives, the situation would be very different from what it is to-day. The claims of the present are, as a rule, more insistent than those of past resolves. The most important factor in the execution of a resolution is the force with which we can launch ourselves. This *force* (*bala*), says Sanatkumāra, is more potent than *vijnāna* (final discernment). In the words of the Upanishad, 'One strong man makes a hundred men of understanding tremble. If a man is strong, he becomes a rising man.'

How is this force or strength obtained? Sanatsumār, it seems to me, leaves for a while the psychic track and turns to the physical basis of vital force. All life depends on food. Food (*atam*) as the builder of bodily energy, ranks higher than strength or force. The problem of food is for individuals as for nations, problem No. 1. Food, on the earth, grows as a result of rain fall. And rain fall is due to the effect of solar heat (*tejas*). The Sun abides in Space (*akāśa*), the final ground of Food which sustains life. Sanatsumār places food higher than vital energy (*śakti*), Water (*apās*) higher than Food, Heat (*tejas*) higher than Water, and Space (*akāśa*) higher than Heat.

It is a feeling of trust. We live in the present, but are ever looking ahead—to the future. We can to some extent determine the future, but in order that we may do it most effectively, we must hope that our efforts will not all be wasted. No man who works for a cause can continue his labours, if he is bereft of Hope. The gate of Hell, according to Dante, bears the inscription —‘ Leave all Hope those who enter here.’ On this side of that dreadful region, Hope is ever our friend. Even if the individual fails, the good cause for which he works does not fail. Our failures may teach us why we fail, and, if we can but learn the lesson, they are not stumbling-blocks, but stepping-stones to our goal. We must have faith in the goodness of the cause and must not lose Hope.

Optimism is helpful, but there is a danger in excessive optimism. It may produce a non-realistic attitude of mind. We may

“ . . trust that *somehow* good
will be the final goal of all,
Defects of doubt and taints of blood ; ”
and that

“ . . . good shall fall
At last—far off—at last, to all,
And every winter change to spring ”

Such trust may result in a paralysis of our wills and turn us into watchers of the game instead

of players. Sanatkumār is alive to this danger and adds that *Prāṇa* (spiritual and vital force) is mightier than Hope. In life, there is nothing so great as life itself. The idea of the supremacy of *prāṇa* finds expression in the Upanishads again and again, and it is not surprising that Sanatkumār places it so high in the hierarchical scale.

Here we meet with a change in the *direction* of the discourse of Sanatkumār. So far we have been moving up. Now the ascent comes to an end, and its place is taken by a lateral movement. In the remaining part of the discourse, he explains a number of concepts and their causal relation. Nārada, as before, puts in a word at intervals just to keep him moving from one point to another.

Life is extolled as the promoter of Life, as the source of more Life. It is everything to us—"father, mother, brother, sister and preceptor." "He who sees this, perceives this, understands this, becomes an *atnādin*—an expounder of the essence of things. A man can become an *atnādin* by knowing the truth. Unless he has *knowledge* (*gyāna*), he cannot declare it." This knowledge cannot be obtained ready-made from another. It is the result of deep *Reflection* (*matī*) on the part of the individual himself. Deep Reflection is, in its turn, grounded in Faith—faith in the possibility

of knowing the Truth Tentative, provisional Doubt has its value in philosophical reflection Modern Philosophy, in Des Cartes, started with such a doubt But where Doubt is not merely tentative, but assumes the form of a conviction that real knowledge, as distinguished from mere opinion, is unattainable, all reflection becomes futile The sceptic avers that he does not and cannot know anything' He can be countered with the retort that his assertion itself claims to be true, and thus refutes his position For scepticism, the only course open is utter speechlessness

Faith is not merely a matter of emotional acquiescence it is rooted in steadiness of the will (*ristha*) "No man's approval," says Goethe, "can be given on compulsion, and, in the last resort, conviction, even when proof has followed proof, is an act of Will"

The steadiness of the will is the outcome of habitual performance of Duty "As we become musicians only by singing, so we become good by doing the good"

"What is the final motive for the doing of Duty?" asks Narada Sanathkumar bases Duty on the Good, and identifies the Good with the true well being of the individual, otherwise called Happiness "Whatever a man does," says he, "he

does with the object of securing his well being
This objective is operative in all he does "

The next question naturally is about the nature of happiness or well being It is to this point that Sanatkumār seems to have been leading Nārada He makes the highly significant declaration --

"Happiness lies in being a Whole, not in being a fragment It lies in being a Whole," (VII 23)

How can one become a Whole ? Is it possible ?

It is an Ideal Even if we cannot attain it, we can at least advance to it And the only way to make this advance, as Bradley has so well pointed out, is *to join a Whole* The absolute Whole, of course, is the Universe or *Brahman* The Stoic ideal was that the individual completely merge himself in the All The ideal, according to the Upanishads, is to recognise the unity of all things in *Brahman*, and to carry *communion* with *Brahman* to a point where it becomes indistinguishable from *union* Within this Infinite Whole, there are smaller wholes Even when, getting out of our narrow, individual selves, we join ourselves to one of these wholes, our life undergoes a change, and we begin to view things in a different perspective For the ordinary man, such a change takes place when he marries His wife and he now form a composite personality : she is a half of his *new* person, and he a half of

her *new* person. This is not a contraction, but an expansion of his personality. When he becomes a father, there is a further expansion of his ego. The child is the visible, concrete expression of the union of two personalities into one—a marriage present that God makes to them. The fragmentariness of the individual is further reduced, when he embraces in his own the interests of others, beyond the bounds of his family. The circle goes on expanding, in case of some, it becomes quite large; and in case of a few, the circumference may almost disappear from our view. In these last, the sense of isolation almost vanishes; they merge themselves in the Whole. That is the state of bliss and highest felicity. “When one sees nothing other than oneself (identifies oneself with all that one sees), hears nothing other than oneself, is aware of nothing other than oneself, *that* is the state of wholeness (*bhūmān*). When one can see something isolated from oneself, can hear something isolated from oneself, be aware of something isolated from oneself, that is the state of being a fragment (*alpa*). The Whole abides for ever; the fragment passes away.”

“The state of wholeness abides in its own glory; its glory is not dependent on the glory of anything else.” “There are those” says Sanat-

kumār, "who look upon cattle, horses, elephants, gold, dependants, wife and estates as the ground of greatness. That is not my view, that is not my view: this would make external objects the ground of greatness." The measure of a man's greatness is not what he *possesses*, but how far he *gives himself away*. True happiness or well-being lies in renunciation.

A summary atestment of the views of Sanat-kumār may be found helpful by the reader.

1. Sanatkumār arranges psychic functions in an ascending order, as follows.—

Sound (Name), Speech (significant word), Thought, Will, Imagination (bringing together relevant aspects of a case for consideration), consideration of the various aspects, Discernment (final judgment about the course to be followed), Capacity, Memory (the means of utilising past experience), Hope, and Vitality.

2. Truth can be affirmed by a man who *knows*; Knowledge depends upon reflection; this last on Faith that Truth is attainable. This Faith or Conviction is ultimately a matter of Will. A strong Will results from habitual performance of Duty. The ultimate motive for the performance of Duty is the urge for well-being or happiness.

3. True happiness lies in being a whole; there is no happiness in being a fragment.

CHAPTER VIII

THE OFFSPRING OF PRAJAPATI

“The threefold offspring of Prajapati—gods, men, and *asuras*—dwelt with their father as Brahmacharins. Having finished their studies of sacred books, the gods said, “Give us some instruction, sir.” Prajapati spoke to them the syllable *da*, and asked, “Have you understood?” “Yes,” replied they, “we have. You have said—“Restrain yourselves—*damyata*.” “That is so,” said Prajapati, “you have understood aright.” Then the men said to him, “Instruct us, sir.” He spoke to them the syllable *da* and asked whether they had understood him. “Yes,” replied they, “we have. You have said—‘Give in charity *datta*.’” “That is, so,” said Prajapati, “You have understood aright.”

Then the *asuras* said to him, “Instruct us, sir.” To them, too, Prajapati spoke the syllable *da* and asked whether they had understood him. “Yes,” said they, “we have. You have said—“Be compassionate—*dayadhyam*.” “That is so,” said Prajapati, “you have understood aright.”

In the peal of thunder, the divine voice

of godliness. We are not to suppose that these three are pure types. About all of us are a mixture of these elements. "We are neither white nor black, but gray." Very few, if any, are absolutely white; very few, if any, absolutely black. We are all, or almost all, between the two extremes, but, on the line, different individuals occupy different positions. The differences between them are so marked that they may be treated as differences of kind. The *Bṛihadāranyaka Upanishad* divides men into three classes—the *devas* who are pre-eminent in intellectual ability, the *asuras* who possess energy and strength in abundance, but have not cultivated the emotional side of their nature, and the average men. The average man is partly a *deva* and partly an *asura*. The *asuras* are said to be older than the *devas*. This means that in the course of evolution, mankind has to pass through these stages, and so also individual men. These stages may be referred to as the pre-social, the social and the post-social. The 'natural' man is essentially egoistic. He is a creature of Impulse. Among his impulses, there is hardly any order or organization. Each impulse seeks to pursue its own course with all the force it can command. Such an individual is bound to come into conflict with other individuals equally

sense of human fellowship, diffused throughout the community. Its most obvious expression is charity in the narrower and the wider sense. For the *devas*, the instruction is—"Be chaste and restrained." The *devas* in a community are the guardians and promoters of its culture, they are its teachers in the various walks of life—educators, artists, ministers of religion, authors, journalists and others of similar types. They do not merely impart knowledge in the sense of information, they also determine the taste and aspirations of the people. In particular, they affect the life and thought of the young. The power they wield is not the naked force of the *asuras*, nor the power of wealth, but the power of the intellect and the spirit. It is necessary that they should wield this power for the good of the community. They can do this only when, along with intellectual gifts, they have unblemished and pure morals.

How the individual grows from one stage to another is indicated by Freud. To begin with, the individual is a creature of Impulse. His life is governed by the Pleasure principle. He is to dominate all others are to minister to his enjoyment. His parents permit him to remain under this comfortable illusion for sometime. Freud gives this pre ego stage of consciousness the name of *Id*.

Later, the individual is led out of this stage. He is not only to dominate, but also to submit. He must relinquish the Pleasure principle and adopt the Reality principle. In adopting an objective or realistic point of view, he best serves his own interest. Now the Ego takes the place of the *Id*. The individual's life is ordered and organized, and he lives as a manageable member of the community. The final stage is reached with the birth of the super ego, ordinarily called conscience. Now the dominant interest in life is not personal profit or advantage but the pursuit of an Ideal. When the individual's consciousness is merely *Id*, he is an *asura*, when it becomes an Ego, he is a man, and when it becomes a super ego, he is a *deva* or an incipient *deva*. The *super ego* has the *right* to govern though not the *might* to enforce its decrees in all cases. The struggle between the *devas* and the *asuras* is a perennial struggle, and the *devas* do not always win or win easily.

II

The *devas* and the *asuras* sought instruction from Prajapati and he chose to give them instruction about the conduct of life. In the Chhandogya, they are represented as seeking metaphysical knowledge about the nature of the Soul

(*Ātman*), "The *Ātman*," says the Upanishad, "is a bridge, it is a support for the preservation of all the worlds from destruction. Beyond the bridge, there is neither day nor night, nor disease, nor death, nor grief. There, one is in the region beyond good and evil. Crossing the bridge, the blind cease to be blind, the wounded cease to be wounded, the troubled cease to be troubled. There the nights become days, ever-shining is that region of *Brahman*."

Prajāpati declared that the *Ātman* should be sought for and enquired after. The *devas* and the *asuras* came to know of it and resolved to acquire the knowledge of the *Ātman*. Indra, among the *devas*, and Virocana, among the *asuras*, repaired to Prajāpati. There they stayed as Brahmacharins for 32 years. At the end of this period, they explained to Prajāpati the object of their visit. Prajāpati said to them, "The being that you see in the eye is the *Ātman* or Soul. . . The same is seen in water and in a mirror." As instructed, they bedecked themselves with ornaments and rich clothing, and beheld themselves in a pailful of water. "What do you perceive?" asked Prajāpati. "We perceive ourselves well dressed and adorned," said they. "That is

Brahman (Ātman), the deathless and fearless," said Prajāpati. The two went away satisfied.

For Virocana, this piece of knowledge was sufficient. Having seen his body reflected in the eye and in water, he had taken it to be his very self. He went back to the *asuras* and conveyed to them what he had learnt of Prajāpati about the nature of the Soul.

On his way back, Indra felt dissatisfied with this materialistic conception of the Soul and returned to Prajāpati. Prajāpati asked him why he had done so. He replied, "This reflection becomes adorned, when the body is adorned, it becomes well dressed, when the body is well dressed, it becomes blind, defective and mutilated, it perishes, when the body perishes. I see no good in such a conception of the Self." "It is so," said Prajāpati, "you stay here as a *Brahma* charin for 32 years more and I shall instruct you further." At the end of 32 years, Prajāpati said to him, "That which, in a dream, has the feeling of being satisfied in various ways is the *Ātman*." Indra went away satisfied.

On his way home, again doubt arose in him. "The self," thought he, "is not the reflection of the material body, it is incorporeal, but in dreams, the self does not merely experience

shads elsewhere. The position generally taken up in the Upanishads is that the state of dreamless sleep is not a state of unconsciousness, but a state in which *objective* consciousness has lapsed, leaving the field free to pure self consciousness, a state when the Self is 'overwhelmed with light'. The final view on the nature of the Self is that the Self is distinct from the body, and during the period it uses the body as its abode, it uses it as an instrument as well. Its desires are due to its contact with the body. But even when it is connected with the body, the Self can detach itself from the body, and perform its functions "without thinking of the body". The views adopted is frankly dualistic.

The word *asura* is commonly translated as "demon". In the two passages given above, the nature of the *asuras* is by no means demoniac or devilish. They are anxious to learn and approach Prajapati in the spirit of true seekers of truth or Brahmacharins. Prajapati regards them as fit to receive ethical instruction and gives them such instruction. They are not the spirits of evil, but only embodiments of unmoralised, savage nature. In the passage from the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, Virocana is satisfied with the materialistic conception of the self. This is how we all begin. The

main trouble with the *asuras* is that they rest content with this conception and stop with it. They don't pass beyond the first stage. So both ethically and intellectually, the *asuras* stand not for the depraved human nature, but for the unmoralised, pre-social stage in its development

able to live without me ? ” They made an answer similar to the one they had given to the Tongue and the Eye. The Ear entered in.

Similar was the case with the Mind and the organ of generation.

“ When the vital Breath (the principal *prāṇa*) was on the point of departing, the remaining organs felt as if they were being torn off, as the pegs to which a strong noble horse of the Indus-land is tethered are torn up by him. They beseeched the vital breath not to depart, as, in its absence, they could not possibly continue to live.” They realised and admitted that their respective excellences were all derived : fundamentally, they belonged to the Vital Breath. The Vital Breath was supreme.”—(Bṛhad. Up VI. 1.).

In the passage quoted above, two points have been stressed.—

(a) There are certain fundamental functions performed by human beings, with the help of specific organs. Each of these functions has a certain value in the economy of life.

(b) Of these functions, the function of maintaining life itself is declared to be “ the first and the best.” Possibly, both these epithets mean the same and refer to the function of self-maintenance as the most eminent; possibly, “ the first ” means

the first born, the oldest "The best" seems to be understood in a purely biological sense

Now what are these main functions and what purpose do they severally serve in the economy of life ?

First, there is the general life process itself The physical basis of life, as Biology tells us, is protoplasm All plants and all animals, despite the differences that separate them from one another, are made of protoplasm In innumerable cases, the protoplasm is found in the form of single cells, in equally innumerable cases, in the form of collections of cells In the case of highly developed organisms, e.g., the human body, there are distinct organs for the performance of specific functions In all living bodies, the protoplasm takes in food, absorbs a part of it and excretes what cannot be absorbed, or later becomes useless for the main purpose This is the fundamental function, the organ to perform it is known as *Prana* and "is the first-born" Other organs are the result of subsequent differentiation

Next, there is speech Human life differs from animal life mainly in being social Among animals too, some are gregarious they live and work together, attack in packs, and defend them-

selves in groups But this is not enough to turn them into social beings Social beings do not merely live and work together they also think together They are able to do this, because they are able to talk to one another Language, while it is the principal instrument of thought, is possible only when a certain capacity for thought has already been acquired The brutes don't talk, because "they have nothing to talk about" In human life, speech is "the best founded" An individual's position in life largely depends on how he can talk

In order that a man may talk effectively, he must have something to talk about He must have acquired some experience, worthy of being communicated to others How is this experience acquired? A part of it is the result of our personal observation, but the major part is derived from the observation of others Personal observation is primarily the work of the Eye The Eye provides us with "a firm basis" of facts it enables us "to distinguish between the even and the uneven ground" The major part of our experience—that derived from the observation of others, is received through the Ear The Ear is the main source of our cultural wealth or treasure For an educated man today, the printed or written

word is the main source of information and instruction, but the capacity to read such word has normally to be acquired with the help of the Ear.

Both these forms of experience have to be digested and organized. The work of the Eye and the Ear is completed by the Mind. The Mind is the place of "refuge for all experience." What we see and hear can truly become ours, only when it has been woven into the texture of the main body of our knowledge—when it has been apperceived.

The next function mentioned in the text is that of procreation. From the purely biological point of view, this is more fundamental than seeing, hearing or thinking. Reproduction is the means of preserving the species. Nature, often so careless of the individual, is "careful of the type." Trees arise and fall; the forest continues.

In the second part of the passage, the relative value of these functions is assessed. The evaluation, as already hinted, is made on purely biological grounds. On these grounds, that which is most necessary is most worthful. Dumbness, blindness, deafness and mental imbecility are serious handicaps in life, but the dumb, the blind, the deaf and the imbecile do pull on in a certain manner. Impotence reduces the worth of the individual to

the race very considerably, but even such an individual may accomplish a lot during the limited span allotted to him. The function of self maintenance is the basis of all these functions, is the most fundamental, the 'best' as it is 'the first born'

'The best,' however, is generally understood in the ethical sense. The evolutionist bases Ethics on Biology, and understands 'the best' to mean "the fittest in the struggle for existence." This view, however, is not shared by the majority of writers on Ethics. Can we consider the relative value of these functions on ethical grounds? Something like this seems to be the intention of another passage in the same Upanishad. The passage reads thus —

"There were two kinds of offspring of Prajapati, the *devas* and the *asuras*. The *devas* were the younger, and the *asuras*, the elder ones. They were struggling with each other for these worlds.

The *devas* said: "Let us overcome the *asuras* at the sacrifice with the help of the *udgitha* (the chant of hymns).

They asked Speech to sing the *udgitha* for them. Speech agreed and sang. Whatever was the object of enjoyment in the singing, it sang for the gods, whatever conducive to welfare was therein, it retained for itself. The *asuras*

knew that the *devas* were employing Speech for singing *udgītha* and would thus overcome them. They rushed upon speech and pierced it with evil—the evil that consists in speaking what is improper (falsehood, slander, blasphemy etc)

The *devas* then approached the sense of smell and asked it to sing the *udgītha* for them. It agreed and sang. Whatever was the object of enjoyment in the singing, it sang for the gods; whatever conducive to welfare was therein, it retained for itself. The *asuras* knew that the *devas* were employing smell for singing *udgītha* for them. They rushed upon smell and pierced it with evil—the evil that consists in smelling what should not be smelled.

The *devas* then asked the Eye to sing the *udgītha* for them. The Eye agreed and sang. Whatever was the object of enjoyment in the singing, it sang for the gods; whatever conducive to welfare was therein, it retained for itself. The *asuras* knew that the *devas* were employing the Eye to sing *udgītha* for them. They rushed upon the Eye and pierced it with evil—the evil that consists in seeing improper sights

The *devas* then approached the Ear and asked it to sing the *udgītha* for them. The Ear agreed and sang.

Whatever was the object of enjoyment in the singing, it sang for the gods ; whatever conducive to welfare was therein, it retained for itself. The *asuras* knew that the *devas* were employing the Ear to sing *udgītha* for them. They rushed upon it and pierced it with evil—the evil that consists in hearing what is bad (dirty talk, slander, etc.)

The *devas* approached the Mind and asked it to sing the *udgītha* for them. The Mind agreed and sang. Whatever was the object of enjoyment in the singing, it sang for them ; whatever conducive to welfare was therein, it retained for itself. The *asuras* knew that the gods were employing the Mind to sing *udgītha* for them. They rushed upon it and pierced it with evil—the evil that consists in harbouring evil thoughts.

Thus the *asuras* touched these deities (Speech etc) with evil ; thus they pierced them with evil.

Finally, the *devas* approached the Vital Breath and asked it to sing the *udgītha* for them. Vital Breath agreed and sang. The *asuras* knew that the gods were employing the Vital Breath to sing *udgītha* for them. They rushed upon it with the intent of piercing it with evil. As a clod of earth, striking on a stone, crumbles and is scattered about, so were the *asuras* smashed in their attack on the

Prāna. Thus the *devas* triumphed and the *asuras* fell ”

(Br Up 13)

In this passage, one single idea is expressed a number of times in identical language—a manner peculiar to the Upanishads. Prajapati is the human Soul, its progeny, the higher and the lower elements in its nature. There is a constant struggle going on between these elements for mastery. The way, for the *devas*, to win the victory is to have *udgītha* sung at the sacrifice. The device adopted by the *asuras* to frustrate the *devas* in their attempt is to defile the singing of the *udgītha*, “to pierce it with evil.” Now the struggle between good and evil is not a struggle between two abstractions. *Udgītha* is to be sung, well or ill, by some organ of the Soul. Speech sings it, but, under the influence of evil, sings not in the spirit appropriate to the performance of the sacrifice. Only a part of the singing does Speech transfer to the gods, a part it retains for itself. And what is worse, the part transferred to the gods (*bhog*) is of lower value than the part retained for itself (*kalyana*). This is certainly not a genuine sacrifice. What is valued as poor stuff is given away. The result is that such singing of the *udgītha* by Speech does not help the *devas* to victory.

Whatever was the object of enjoyment in the singing, it sang for the gods ; whatever conducive to welfare was therein, it retained for itself. The *asuras* knew that the *devas* were employing the Ear to sing *udgītha* for them. They rushed upon it and pierced it with evil—the evil that consists in hearing what is bad (dirty talk, slander, etc.)

The *devas* approached the Mind and asked it to sing the *udgītha* for them. The Mind agreed and sang. Whatever was the object of enjoyment in the singing, it sang for them ; whatever conducive to welfare was therein, it retained for itself. The *asuras* knew that the gods were employing the Mind to sing *udgītha* for them. They rushed upon it and pierced it with evil—the evil that consists in harbouring evil thoughts.

Thus the *asuras* touched these deities (Speech etc.) with evil, thus they pierced them with evil.

Finally, the *devas* approached the Vital Breath and asked it to sing the *udgītha* for them. Vital Breath agreed and sang. The *asuras* knew that the gods were employing the Vital Breath to sing *udgītha* for them. They rushed upon it with the intent of piercing it with evil. As a clod of earth, striking on a stone, crumbles and is scattered about, so were the *asuras* smashed in their attack on the

Prāna. Thus the *devas* triumphed and the *asuras* fell”

(Br. Up 1.3)

In this passage, one single idea is expressed a number of times in identical language—a manner peculiar to the Upanishads. *Prajāpati* is the human Soul, its progeny, the higher and the lower elements in its nature. There is a constant struggle going on between these elements for mastery. The way, for the *devas*, to win the victory is to have *udgītha* sung at the sacrifice. The device adopted by the *asuras* to frustrate the *devas* in their attempt is to defile the singing of the *udgītha*, “to pierce it with evil” Now the struggle between good and evil is not a struggle between two abstractions. *Udgītha* is to be sung, well or ill, by some organ of the Soul. Speech sings it, but, under the influence of evil, sings not in the spirit appropriate to the performance of the sacrifice. Only a part of the singing does Speech transfer to the gods; a part it retains for itself. And what is worse, the part transferred to the gods (*bhog*) is of lower value than the part retained for itself (*kalyāna*). This is certainly not a genuine sacrifice. What is valued as poor stuff is given away. The result is that such singing of the *udgītha* by Speech does not help the *devas* to victory.

Such spurious sacrifice does not make for the triumph of good over evil. The Eye sings the *udgitha*, but it also succumbs to the solicitation of evil. Its work too is not disinterested. The Ear and the Mind are likewise affected by the principle of evil. The result is that, *with such aid as this*, the good in man does not thrive against the evil in him. Finally, the *udgitha* is sung by the Vital Breath, and sung in a different spirit. This breath functions for the welfare of the entire system, it appropriates nothing for its individual good. Its service is *thoroughly disinterested, a sacrifice in the true sense of the word*. The tables are now turned: the *devas* triumph, the *asuras* are smashed.

The main idea, reinforced by reiteration, is that *Prana* is the best, the noblest of all human functions, because it symbolises *disinterested work*. This kind of work is the very soul of virtue. The instruction conveyed in the two passages taken together is that *Prana* is the first—the oldest of all, it is the most indispensable and finally it possesses the highest ethical worth.

It is worthy of note that the struggle between the good and the bad in human nature is carried on on a moral plane. The *asuras* are generally conceived as possessors of tremendous power. But, with the help of this power, they cannot crush

the *devas*. No force or violence can crush the virtuous spirit. It is invulnerable so far as such attacks are concerned. The only way to smash the *devas* is to contaminate them, to infect them with the *asura* spirit. The *asuras* try to assimilate the *devas* to themselves, to wean them from their natural mode of life. Sheer force cannot destroy the nobility of a soul, the device that is employed is *temptation*. When Gautama received light and became the Buddha, Mara could not injure him. The only device that Māra could employ was to tempt Buddha, to suggest to him that he should forthwith quit the body and attain *nirvāna*. Buddha resisted the temptation. To other teachers of humanity also, the spirit of evil appeared as the Tempter.

On a larger scale, what do we see in political conflicts? The exploiting, governing class wants to retain its position of privilege. It cannot exterminate the victims of exploitation. Even if it could, it would not be so foolish as to do it. It cannot keep them in a state of perpetual intimidation. Cajolery succeeds for sometime, but its hollowness is soon discovered. The readiest and the most effective method to deal with the large masses of the exploited is to *corrupt* them. It succeeds very well. The only hope for a sub-

ject people is in the incorruptibility of its leaders. The *devas* can overcome the *asuras* by the singing of the *udgītha*, provided the singer is the *prāṇa*, the ceaseless worker whose work is not tainted by selfishness.

CHAPTER XV

FROM HERE AND THERE

(Some sayings culled from the Upanishads)

1 Whatever moves in this world of change and movement is enveloped by God. Enjoy the good things of life as gifts of God. Covet not what belongs to another — (Isa 1)

2 Let a man desire to live a life of a hundred years—engaged in action. This is the only way one can be free from the taint of Action. There is no other way — (Ibid 2)

3 He who beholds all beings in the Self and the Self in all beings, manifests no antipathy to any one.

When a man perceives unity of the Self manifested in all beings, where, after this perception, is there room for attachment and for grief? (Ibid 6, 7)

4 Breath will pass into the immortal air outside, the body will be consumed to ashes. Remember what you were to do and what you have done; remember what you were to do and what you have done — (Ibid 17)

this Brahma-wheel is made to revolve.—(Śveta. VI. 1).

12. There are three branches of Duty (*dharma*).

Sacrifice, study of the scriptures and almsgiving : this is the first branch.

Austerity (*tapas*) is the second branch.

The Brahmacharin, dwelling in the house of the teacher and living an austere life there, is the third —(Chhandogya : II 23 (1,2)).

13. Man is the creature of his own volition. Whatever he does in this life determines what he would be when he departs this life. Let him plan his life-work (keeping this in view) (Ibid III. 14. (1))

14 Man's life is a sacrifice.

The first twenty-four years are the morning libation. This is offered with the *gāyatrī*, which consists of 24 syllables. The *īśās* are the presiding deities. The *prāṇas* are the *īśās*, for they cause everything to abide or continue

The next 44 years are the mid-day libation. This is offered with the *tristubh* hymns, having 44 syllables each. The *rudras* are the presiding deities. The *prāṇas* are the *rudras*, for they cause all the wailing and tears. The last 48 years are the third libation. This is offered with *jagatī* hymns, each having 48 syllables. The *ādityas* are the presiding

5 The Good is one thing and the Pleasant another Both, having different objects, chain a man It is well with the man who chooses the Good, the man who chooses the Pleasant misses his aim —(Katha II 1)

6 Arise, awake ! Having secured the company of saints, attain to knowledge The seers declare that the path to realization is as difficult to traverse as the sharp edge of a razor —(Ibid III 14)

7 The self-existent Lord pierced the openings of the senses outward Therefore, man looks outward, and not within himself —(Ibid IV 1)

8 When all the desires cherished by him have ceased, then does the mortal become immortal, then does he obtain the *Brahman* When all the bonds of the heart are loosened in this life, then does the mortal become immortal Instruction goes no further than this —(Ibid VI 14, 15)

9 The Self can be realized by the practice of Truth, by Austerity, by appropriate Knowledge and by constant practice of chastity —(Mundak III, 1(5))

10 Truth alone conquers, not untruth —(Ibid III 1(6))

11 Some 'wise' men speak of the Nature of things, others of Time as the cause of the world. Deluded men ! It is the glory of God by which

this Brahma wheel is made to revolve —(Śveta VI 1)

12 There are three branches of Duty (*dharma*)

Sacrifice, study of the scriptures and alms-giving this is the first branch

Austerity (*tapas*) is the second branch

The Brahmacharin, dwelling in the house of the teacher and living an austere life there, is the third —(Chhandogya II 23 (1,2))

13 Man is the creature of his own volition. Whatever he does in this life determines what he would be when he departs this life Let him plan his life work (keeping this in view) (Ibid III 14 (1))

14 Man's life is a sacrifice

The first twenty four years are the morning libation This is offered with the *gayatri*, which consists of 24 syllables The *vasus* are the presiding deities The *pranas* are the *vasus*, for they cause everything to abide or continue

The next 44 years are the mid day libation This is offered with the *trishhtubh* hymns, having 44 syllables each The *rudras* are the presiding deities The *pranas* are the *rudras*, for they cause all the wailing and tears The last 48 years are the third libation This is offered with *jagati* hymns, each having 48 syllables The *adityas* are the presiding

deities. The *prānas* are the *ādityas*, for they carry everything along (Ibid. III. 16 (1, 3, 5.)).*

15. The body withers and dies when the living Self leaves it. The Self dies not.—(Ibid VI. II(3)).

16. Vitality ranks higher than Hope.—(Ibid. VII. 15 (1)).

17. Happiness lies in being a whole ; there is no happiness in being a fragment.—(Ibid. VII. 23.)

18 Short lived are the fruits of exertion here (*karmjita loka*) ; and limited also the fruits of meritorious action (*punya-jit loka*). For those who depart this life without having discovered the Self and its worthy desires, there is no freedom anywhere ; for those who have in their life-time discovered the Self and its worthy desires, there

* The total duration of life, when properly lived, is given here as 116 years. Generally, this is given as a century. Is the writer or the speaker unduly affected by the number of syllables in the metres of the hymns used for the three daily sacrifices ? The underlying idea is that life has three stages : the first stage (24 years) is the period of Growth, the period of building up a reserve that would enable the individual to abide, when the income is no longer in excess of the expenditure, the second stage (44 years) is the period of stress and strain, presided over by the *rudras*, the deities of worries, tears and lamentations, the third stage (48 years) is the period of contraction, of rest and quiet, when the individual can just 'carry on'. When a friend or an acquaintance accosts the writer (68) with the usual—'How are you?', the answer given generally is—'Thank you, pulling on.'

is freedom and fruition everywhere —(Ibid VIII 1 (6))

19 Verily, fear arises from another only (Brihadaranyaka I 4 (2))

20 In this world, everything is either food or the consumer of food —(Ibid I 4(6))

21 *Dharma* (Duty, Moral Law) is the strength of the strong There is nothing higher than *dharmā* With the help of *dharmā*, as with the help of a king, even the weak become stronger than the strong

Dharma is Truth When a person speaks the truth, he is said to speak *dharmā*, and when he speaks *dharmā*, he is said to speak the truth *Dharma* and truth are the same thing —(Ibid I 4 (14))

22 In the beginning, the *Ātman* was alone, without a second He desired "Let me have a mate, then I would procreate Let me have wealth, then I would be able to do something (find some mode of self expression)" Human desire extends only so far Even if a man desired more than this, he would not get it Even today, a man's desires are for a mate, for offspring, for wealth and for self expression In the absence of any of these, he regards himself as incomplete.—(Ibid I 4 (17))

23 In due course, a true Brahmin rises above